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Wm Walter Phelps.

William Walter Phelps

His Life
and
Public Services

Compiled by

Hugh M. Herrick

The Knickerbocker Press
New York
1904

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The Knickerbocker Press, New York

PREFACE

IN this volume is told the story of the life of William Walter Phelps: of his surroundings of refinement and culture in his early years; his youthful training and devotion to study, fitting him for a career of renown as a lawyer, orator, and statesman; how it was his good fortune to be intimate with the most exalted men of his time and to become the compeer of the leading statesmen of the age; how on attaining the highest rank in diplomacy he conferred, with honor to himself, notable and enduring benefits upon his country; how he took the joys of life sedately and endured its sufferings silently and heroically; how, after reaping the honor of many high stations, he died in the prime of his manhood, leaving no stain upon his private or public life.

If any explanation be needed of what might seem to be more than an amplitude of detail or appear to be an irrelevant digression in these annals, it may be said that there was available much tempting material that told of Judge Phelps's life and its manifold events, his wide surroundings and his striking personality, and that, even as it is, much had to be omitted; yet the writer was willing to incur the charge of being tiresome rather than leave the record incomplete. Also, that the career of a public man of eminence cannot be thoroughly portrayed without flashing occasional side-lights upon travellers along the same roadway other than the main character.

There are numerous quotations from the newspapers of the land. Much of Judge Phelps's activities were

chronicled in the newspapers because he was constantly within the focus of public observation and was continuously doing or saying something that editors thought worth telling to the world. The acts of few men in public life will bear close scrutiny; those of Judge Phelps's will; consequently he was seldom the subject of comments by the press which were not laudatory.

This memorial has been prepared for the family and descendants of Judge Phelps and for circulation among his friends. There was so much in his open life to praise and so little to blame that his biographer has given, largely upon the testimony of others, the praiseworthy record that he made, without any fear that he has overestimated the departed statesman's virtues. It has been written, therefore, in no spirit of criticism, but with the chief purpose of correctness of statement in the chronological arrangement of the occurrences and incidents of Judge Phelps's life, and with a desire to give them fully and completely.

It is also intended that this volume shall not only perpetuate Judge Phelps's memory with posterity, but be a reminder to his descendants of how their distinguished ancestor was honored among men in his day and generation, and inspire and guide them to an emulation of his industrious and useful life.

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WILLIAM WALTER PHELPS

His Life and Public Services

As this memorial is printed for private distribution, it is possible that some who are desirous of possessing the volume may not be reached, in which case a limited number of copies may be obtained, at the cost price of publication, from The Knickerbocker Press, 27–29 West Twenty-third Street, New York.

WILLIAM WALTER PHELPS:

HIS LIFE AND PUBLIC SERVICES

CHAPTER I

The Phelps Family in England—William Phelps, the Founder of the American Branch, Lands at Nantasket in 1630—Settles at Simsbury, Conn.—A Race of Public-Spirited Men—John Jay Phelps

WILLIAM WALTER PHELPS was born at Dundaff, Susquehanna County, Pennsylvania, August 24, 1839. His father was John Jay Phelps, one of the most successful and distinguished merchants and financiers of New York City. The progenitor of the Phelpses in this country came from England. The ancestry of this branch of the Phelps family has been traced back to the eleventh century.

It is recorded that the Phelps family originally came from Northern Italy, in the Middle Ages, the name then being Guelph. In the early part of the eleventh century some of the family emigrated to Germany, where the name was spelled Felps, Velps, or Vulps. Some of these who emigrated to Germany went in after-years to England, where the name in time became Phellyppes, but always pronounced Phelps. The superfluous letters were dropped during the reign of Edward VI., in the middle of the sixteenth century. The race became numerous in Somersetshire and Gloucestershire and for several hundred

years furnished many personages of celebrity in English history.

The founder of the family in America from which William Walter Phelps descended was William Phelps of Tewkesbury, England, who came to this country in the ship called the *Mary and John*, which sailed from Plymouth in 1630. He and his children landed at Nantasket (now Hull, Massachusetts), and lived at Dorchester, near Boston, for five years, when they moved to Windsor, Connecticut. In those days geographical lines were not very closely drawn in the colonies, and what was afterward known as Simsbury was considered by general consent as a part of Windsor, but in fact it was outlying and unsurveyed land under Indian titles, and was known as Massacoe. Connecticut, however, acquired these lands from the Indians, and made a grant of them under certain conditions to inhabitants of Windsor. Among those who took up land under this grant was Joseph Phelps, the son of William Phelps, and he removed there with the other grantees before 1669. In 1670 petition was made to the General Court of Connecticut for township privileges, and the court ordered that the plantation at Massacoe be incorporated as the township of Simsbury.

The Indian neighborhood where Joseph Phelps located his lands was called Weatogue, and that is now the name of a railroad station about a mile from the first Phelps settlement, which of late years has been known as Bushy Hill. It is eleven miles from Hartford and two miles or more from the present village of Simsbury. The original Phelps homestead at this place is still the home of descendants of the pioneer. A few acres and the old farmhouse built by Alexander Phelps, who came in a direct line from Joseph, and who was John Jay Phelps's father, are an inheritance of Captain John J. Phelps, a son of William Walter Phelps, but the remainder of the original Phelps estate at Bushy Hill has been acquired by the Rev. D. Stuart Dodge, D.D., President of the Board of

Home Missions of the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America, who married Ellen Ada, the only daughter of John Jay Phelps, and the large stone mansion on this beautiful spot is the country home of Mr. Dodge and his family.

George Phelps, a brother of the first William, also settled at Windsor and Simsbury, but later removed to Westfield, Massachusetts. From this branch of the family sprang Anson G. Phelps, the widely known New York merchant of the firm of Phelps, Dodge & Co.

Simsbury is pleasantly situated on the Farmington River, which winds down from the Berkshire Hills of Massachusetts and enters the Connecticut River above Hartford, and following the course of the waters, many of the descendants of the original settlers went to the metropolis, and they and their children became scattered all over the country, even to the Pacific States.

The Phelps family in this country seems always to have taken very readily to politics and public affairs, perhaps having inherited that propensity from its English ancestors and the pioneer William, for the latter, as soon as he made his home in Connecticut, began to be interested in the politics and public questions of the day. He held various offices high and low and was the first Judge of the Circuit Court of the State. Not only was he the ancestor of a line of thrifty farmers, but many of his descendants have been distinguished throughout the Union as soldiers, scholars, jurists, governors, diplomatists, State and national legislators. William Walter Phelps's great-grandfather represented the town of Simsbury for thirty successive years in the Legislative Assembly of Connecticut, and the name of Phelps is found all through the roster of the congresses.

John Jay Phelps, father of William Walter Phelps, was born in 1810, at Bushy Hill. The line of descent from the pioneer William Phelps was this: I. William Phelps; II. Joseph, m. Hannah Newton; III. Joseph, b. 1667,

m. Mary Collier, Sarah Case, and Mary Case; IV. Ensign David, m. Abigail Pettibone; V. Captain David, b. 1773, m. Abigail, daughter of Edward Griswold; VI. Alexander, m. Elizabeth Eno; VII. John J. Phelps.

The father of John Jay Phelps, although the farmer of many acres, had many sons and little wealth. He could not give his boys a fine education, but in their home they were taught to be industrious, frugal, persevering, and honest, and thus was laid in the character of John Jay Phelps the foundation upon which he built a great fame as a successful merchant and foremost man of affairs. He had the usual life of toil as a farmer's boy on stubborn New England soil, a few months' schooling in the short days of the winter, and hard work during the long hours of the summer. He followed the plough before he was twelve years old, and treading the furrows, there begun in his heart a feeling of unrest and a longing for the greater knowledge and the greater life beyond the farm. His entreaties to be allowed to go out and make "a struggle with the world" were finally yielded to by his father and mother, and at the age of fourteen, without resources except a "brave spirit," he left his country home, as many other New England boys have done, to seek his future in the world, and, like many other boys to whom a college course was impossible, he sought a printing-office education. He became an apprentice in a newspaper office in New Haven. His progress was varied, but he worked so assiduously that several years before he attained his majority he was the owner of the *New England Review*, published at Hartford, which was then his home. He had George D. Prentice, who later became the famous editor of the *Louisville Journal*, as his partner, and the afterwards distinguished poet Whittier as his apprentice. A memoir of him by his gifted son said:

> He longed for a wider field, for action, for wealth that should spare his children the sacrifices of poverty. In the romances

he sometimes penned for his country circulation it was easy to see the influence of a metropolitan splendor, of a successful New York life upon his imagination. His heroes were merchant princes, their mansions were rich with the refinement of European civilization, paintings, statues, books, all the appliances of art exercised a softening influence upon their homes; and in the midst of this material splendor, they ruled a household growing up in the practice of every New England virtue—integrity, charity, public spirit, and patriotism. To believe that capital had more influence than a country editor was for him to seek capital. Action immediately followed conception.

The newspaper was sold. He set out to seek increased fortune and prominence, going into a new country which was then the wilds of Pennsylvania, but which has since become the best known "coal region" of the world. There, in the little village of Dundaff, he went into the service of Col. Gould S. Phinney, a glass manufacturer. His services were so valuable that he soon became a partner in the business, and then married, in 1835, Rachel Badgerly Phinney, his partner's daughter. He strove to become a successful manufacturer and accomplished his purpose. The future possibilities of a country business did not satisfy his restless ambition. He sold out his interests in Dundaff, and with the profits he went to New York, where he was joined by his cousin of the same age, Amos R. Eno. They began business in a humble way, but in a few years Eno & Phelps were among the leading merchants of that city. After ten years of business success, they dissolved partnership and each established new firms. There sprung from the Eno & Phelps concern a number of most noted and prosperous mercantile houses of New York, among which were Phelps, Chittenden & Bliss, S. B. Chittenden & Co., George Bliss & Co., in all of which John Jay Phelps was financially interested. His energy and indisputable uprightness, and his unerring judgment, which was unsurpassed, were the causes of his unprecedented success.

Gradually he retired from the mercantile business, became an operator in real estate, and made large sums of money. He erected blocks of business buildings in New York, and was also then one of the very largest owners of personal property in the whole country. He was also an investor in many other business enterprises, in which he was invariably successful, and was in the vanguard of the great railroad progress of his time.

It was through his business foresight in regard to the development of the Pennsylvania coal regions that what is now known as the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad was constructed. He was its largest stockholder and first President, and was one of its Boards of managers to the close of his life. He was a director in other railroads in which he was a stockholder. During the latter part of his life he gave his whole time and attention, outside of his real-estate demands, to the management of railways, banks, trust companies, and other corporations in each of which he was a director, and in all of which it was said "his will was always the law."

The next day after this man of power and eminence was laid in his grave, William Walter Phelps, in order that his children, when they should grow up, might have a true knowledge of their grandfather's character and great worth, wrote a letter addressed to his infant daughter, Marian, containing a memoir of his father's life, a writing which was unexcelled in its tender expressions of filial affection, its beauty of thought, the simplicity and true eloquence of its diction. From this beautiful tribute by the son has been derived most of the history of John Jay Phelps that will be found recorded in this book.

Before he was forty years of age he retired from active business with every wish gratified. He was a strong man; to those who knew him but slightly he might have seemed a hard man. Having made up his mind to a proper course he was indifferent

to public comment. He did not despise it: he was independent of it. I can look back to infancy, boyhood, early manhood, and through all the scenes of these varied stages, recognize the shadow of his presence ever with me; in them all—school, college, political and professional life, I knew his eye was on me, his watchful sympathy mine. In them, all through these thirty years of life was no declaration of sorrow when defeat came to me, or of joy when success crowned my efforts. He was an iron furnace so hermetically sealed that the seven-fold fire within exhibited no gleam. I never knew the philosophy of this strange reticence; probably the lonesome hours of boyhood on the Simsbury Hills, the more lonesome hours of the fierce struggle he waged for wealth and position in youth aided in developing a natural tendency to this self-restraint.

But this man, so apparently cold and austere, was really capable of the warmest friendships and the kindest interest in those whom he thought worthy of his intimacy and regard, as letters from him in his early manhood most plainly show. Not long after he was settled in business at Dundaff, which he then called "The West," and when not quite twenty years old and unmarried, he wrote to Nathan C. Ely, a young man who had been one of his associates in Hartford, as follows:

As I hear nothing from you I am beginning to believe that you consider me minus a letter. If so, here goes. By the way, I should like to make such a bargain with you as I endeavored to make with Eno when I lived in Hartford, *i. e.*, I offered to go and spend one night in four with him, in return for which he was to spend the remaining three with me. To bring the matter about, I argued that my accommodations were so much superior to his, that they stood respectively as one to four. Now what I wish to make of this, is—that you in consideration of the abundance of your materials shall furnish me with three letters, while I return one. Not that this arrangement would be perfectly just—but fact is, Ely, this is a woful barren country in incident, and 't would be worse

than horrible to make one out of such "measley" materials. However, I will do as you direct in this matter.

Well, my good friend, how do you flourish? How prospering? Like the "green bay tree" I trust. But how can you content yourself in that psalm-singing city of yours? Hast no desire to go out from among the heathen and make a way for yourself in the wilderness regions of the West? Can you content yourself there, treading the same road and pursuing the same track with those who are at least twenty-five years behind the balance of our people in industry and enterprise? They tell me, however, that Hartford is improving—that a new era is commencing—that the citadel of Aristocracy has been stormed, and its inmates made to "hide their diminished heads"—that Jacksonism has disappeared from your borders, and that nothing is left of the foul monster but a kind of sulphurous smell, which would seem to insinuate that the old fellow had gone to "his own place."

Well, go on; there is a power which can "change the skin of the Ethiop" and the spots of the leopard. That and that only, will change Hartford this century.

But come to think again, Hartford is not such a bad place as many would suppose, and come to reflect again, I am almost inclined to rub out every unkind word I have written over the leaf. 'T is even so; when I think a second time of the many kindnesses I experienced there—of the many pleasant associations connected with my sojourn there—of its city associations for improvement and its country advantages for recreation—I can say in reference to Boston, New York, New Haven, etc., etc.—Many cities have done nobly, but thou, Hartford, excellest them all. There, when you read my first opinion of Hartford, read the above codicil annexed and say it is like the politician's course, on both sides of the fence.

This woody, hilly country of railroads and canals—of anthracite coal and "Bitumenous" Irishmen to dig it—of Mynhers Dutchmen—of fair weather and pretty girls—is improving wonderfully. The operations made by the Delaware & Hudson Canal Co. six miles from us, at Carbondale, are really astonishing. They are expecting to send down by the canal this season ten thousand tons of coal for the New York market.

They have excavated the banks to the distance of more than four hundred feet in several places,—having small railroads entering the mines on which the coal is brought out. Ely, come out here this fall, will ye, and see me. A visit from you will be like the consolations of religion to a dying man—of extreme unction to the soul of a buried Catholic—for know ye that I am in a scripture sense dead to the world—having renounced it—that is, till I go to New York or Hartford, which latter place I am making calculations to visit some four weeks hence.

Why do I never meet with you in New York? I am in the city on an average about once each three weeks.

How do the Lyceums flourish in your city? How does my old friend the *Review* flourish? In your next tell me all about them, and everything else—not forgetting "old men and young men—old maids and maidens."

This epistle displays just a slight flash-light picture of Hartford more than seventy years ago. It shows that the writer had a sense of genuine humor, while it gives quite a new impression of what John Jay Phelps was in his younger days. Other letters written by him show that he was a most tender and loving husband. While establishing himself in business in New York, his young wife remained for a time in Dundaff, and then how he began to make a proper home in New York is told in the following letter. He always addressed his wife in the most endearing terms.

Your extremely short letter of the 3rd is received bearing tidings of your continued good health. I have a piece of good news to tell you. And first, I have hired a house; Second, have bought my furniture; and Third, go to house-keeping the first of May. There, now you can wander as much as you please. Yes, I have hired N. C. Ely's house on Third Street, a long way up town, you know, and bought all of his furniture, excepting bedding, silverware, and one carpet. So everything is in complete order. Two pine tables, two sofas, carpets,

tubs, kettles, pots, bakers, crockery, and everything you can think of. Rent $800.00. Now, I hope the Colonel will be satisfied.

Now dear, shall I let Eno and his wife keep house until you come down or shall I keep house, or how shall we manage? I have possession the first of May. Perhaps you can come down about the tenth of May. However, I shall expect to see you before a great while. My shirt does *not* fit. The bosom comes up so high that the collar will *button over my chin.*

I have no news yet from Simsbury. Have not seen Mr. or Mrs. High since I last wrote.

I am in a hurry dear and must bid you good-by.

Mr. Ely it seems abandoned Hartford for New York, as was suggested to him in the letter of his friend Phelps. He became a prosperous and leading citizen of the metropolis and for many years was well and favorably known in business and political circles, and as president of a prominent fire insurance company. One day in the latter part of his life, William Walter Phelps received from Mr. Ely a reminiscent communication concerning his old tenant. The letter contained a time-worn copy of an old lease and a small piece of silk. Here is what the letter said:

PETER COOPER FIRE INSURANCE COMPANY,
N. C. ELY, President.

NEW YORK, 19 Jan'y, 1885.

HON. WM. WALTER PHELPS,

Dear Sir:

I think you may have been born in this Third Street house. At all events you should be glad to know that your father (no more honorable man ever lived) of his *own* free will gave my wife a very rich silk dress pattern, because one of his servants in stirring a coal fire with a long poker chipped a small piece from the under side of the marble mantle.

I should never have discovered it in any probability, but your father *did* and gave the valuable silk dress pattern. I have a small piece saved with the rental agreement, which I

have kept together for 47 years. I send them to you that you may continue to keep them together if you wish.

Respectfully yours,

N. C. Ely.

It should be borne in mind that a silk dress in those days was of a great deal more importance and of far more value than now.

When John Jay Phelps was in the height of his prosperity as a merchant, there was little trade for New York houses west of Ohio and Michigan, but this enterprising and sagacious man of affairs sought to push the business of his firm to the Mississippi, and while on one of his tours to extend his trade to the then far West, the letters he wrote to his wife contained much that was descriptive and interesting relating to the conditions in that new section of the country at that time, and one of them is here introduced. It is dated Burlington, Iowa, August 22, 1841:

You would not get a line from me here, were it not that I am likely to be detained here for some little time unexpectedly. I wrote you last from Saint Louis. From there I took the steamboat up the Mississippi as far as the Illinois, and there up that river about 100 miles to a small town called Florance. The current of the Illinois river has hardly a perceptible movement. It is a dead sluggish mass of water. The banks are regularly overflowed and the waters set far back, where they remain until they are absorbed by evaporation. This renders the country in the neighborhood of the river unhealthy to a great degree. Indeed, every place we passed on the river was filled with fever. It was literally engraven upon the water, and on the shore. After doing my business at Florance, I started for Springfield, east of the Illinois river, when, after travelling 4 or 5 miles, my eye was gratified with the first sight of a prairie. Indeed the road to Springfield is literally through a succession of prairies: vast fields, sometimes 15 or 20 miles in extent, frequently with not a tree or shrub to relieve the eye in the whole distance—nothing save a rank growth of

coarse grass intermingled with a species of plant bearing gaudy flowers, which grow some 5 or 6 feet in height. These prairies are bounded by small strips of timberland generally a mile or two in breadth, and frequently little islands of timber are seen in the centre of their vast solitudes. On the way to Springfield is Jacksonville, a very pretty town, in which is a college.

Springfield is to be the capital of the state, and is a flourishing place. This town, or rather city, as also Jacksonville, is situated on the edge of large prairies. From Jacksonville to Springfield I went in a one horse buggy, and on my return to Jacksonville I took stage to Quincy, crossed the Illinois river at a place called Naples. There had been four deaths the week before, tho' the place was almost deserted. I counted 20 stores and shops vacated. There was not a well person at the tavern—the ferry man was sick, and all his people—and the driver rowed us across the river—and I can assure you I was glad to get away from a scene of such distress. We upset once in the stage and arrived at Quincy Thursday, P.M. Here I found many friends, and a first rate hotel. I stayed until Friday P.M. when I hired a man to take me to Bloomington, above here. We got along very well till within twenty miles of here, yesterday, when we found the late prodigious showers of rain had raised the rivers and creeks to such an extent that we could not possibly get our horse across. I got a horse-back ride to this place, where I shall probably have to stay a day or two, and perhaps more, waiting for a boat to go to Bloomington. From Bloomington I go to Chicago, when I shall consider myself almost home.

I have been through some pretty tough scenes, but my health is good, and spirits ditto. I have not heard from you since I left Louisville and I am very anxious. Perhaps you will want to know what I think of Illinois. I should say about one half the state was richer in soil than any country I have seen; but I would not undertake to live on it for India's wealth. The other half is situated more high, soil good, and is extremely desirable as a residence. The first half is filled with flowers, and always will be. The other part is somewhat unhealthy but I think when the country becomes more improved it will be healthy as most countries.

Tell Ellen Papa thinks of her every day. She must be a good girl and learn to read before I return. Kiss the babies for me.

The penmanship of these letters was firm and very plain and neat; there was not an erasure or interlineation in any one of them. They were in expression and execution characteristic of the man. No one could read them without feeling that the estimate of the character of the father by the son was correct, and that he was a man of generous emotions, under whose cold exterior beat the warmest of hearts.

John Jay Phelps, after he became a man of wealth, built in 1852 a large and handsome house at the corner of Madison Avenue and Thirty-sixth Street; the grounds attached to it extended along the avenue nearly a whole block. Although his prosperity led Mr. Phelps into no self-indulgences or wasteful habits of gratification, yet chiefly for those whom he cherished he created a home of luxury, refinement, and artistic taste.

But all this did not keep the destroyer from the door. About the year 1865 it became too plainly foreshadowed that the dreaded malady consumption would surely and speedily shorten the great financier's life; yet to the last, as his strength gradually wasted away, he never became inactive. He lost no interest in his own affairs nor in the current events of the day. He was always cheerful and never once complained as the shadows darkened. It was in his last days that this "strong man armed" laid aside his armor, revealing to wife, children, and close friends the tender and loving nature of a most remarkable man.

Surrounded by those whom he loved best, he died a true Christian May 12, 1869, at the age of fifty-eight. His funeral sermon was by the Rev. Dr. Stephen H. Tyng, in St. George's Episcopal Church. Mr. Phelps had built in the cemetery at Simsbury a spacious family vault, and therein his ashes repose.

CHAPTER II

Early Life of William Walter Phelps—Enters Yale at Sixteen—Leaves College to Travel in Ireland for His Health—How He Acquired a Phenomenal Memory—Married on Evening of Graduation to Miss Ellen Maria Sheffield—The Sheffield Family—A Bridal Tour in Europe

THE family of John Jay Phelps lived but a few years in the Third Street house, to which allusion has been made, but removed to a more spacious residence in Waverly Place, fronting Washington Square. At times the family spent the summer at Dundaff, and while at their temporary home in that place in 1839, William Walter Phelps was born. There was a younger son named Frank, but he lived only to the age of seven. A daughter, Ellen Ada, was born earlier. These were the only children of the family.

It had been the continuous ambition of John Jay Phelps to become the founder of a family which should be not only one of permanent wealth, but of distinction in the world. After the death of the younger son it was natural that it should be impressed upon the mind of the elder, even in his youthful years, that it would be expected of him to sustain the high social rank in which his family was moving and that the opportunities would be within his reach to add still greater lustre to the family name.

Saratoga was at that time the summer resting-place of the most eminent and fashionable New York families. In his later life William Walter Phelps when visiting Saratoga told how he used to be sent up to his family at the

beginning of the school vacation in the city, when he would meet the stately family carriage at Ballston, then the terminus of the railroad. There, with liveried coachman and footman in their places, he would ride in the great coach alone, dashing through the town to his home. The next day he and other boys, barefooted and with trousers rolled up, would be splashing the water on each other and wading into the pond filled from Congress Spring. Congress Park was not then the elegant place it is now, for the spring and the grounds were in a quite primitive condition, and the flow from the spring made a large mud puddle, which was a favorite play spot for the village urchins. Mr. Phelps would laughingly relate this incident as an evidence of the levelling tendency of boyhood fellowship and the natural democracy of mankind when unembarrassed by artificial conditions and social restraints. In his future intercourse with his fellow-men of all stations, Mr. Phelps conspicuously acted upon the belief that a man of high position, true greatness of character, and real ability never added to his influence, dignity, and importance by keeping aloof from the common people.

Mr. Phelps had his first school experience at Mount Washington Institute, New York, of which Rev. Dr. George W. Clark was principal, and where Roscoe Conkling was also a scholar. He is described by one who knew him well as a round-faced, rosy-cheeked boy, with sparkling dark eyes. He was not physically very strong, but was active, and attracted notice by sprightliness. When at this school at the age of twelve, he made what may be called his first appearance in public. A Dr. Skinner, an enthusiast on the subject of the prevention of the drinking and sale of liquor, originated a device through which he thought he could get the youth of the city interested in the subject of prohibition. He offered a large prize to the pupil of any school who would write and deliver the best speech on that subject. The speeches were to be made by youths of sixteen or under, and a committee, of

which Rev. Dr. S. H. Tyng was chairman, received the manuscripts and selected from among them the fifteen believed to be most worthy. The writers delivered their speeches in the old Broadway Tabernacle, situated on Broadway below Canal Street, then a famous place for public gatherings of all kinds. Young Phelps, not thirteen years of age, had the good fortune to be one of those selected. He was the youngest competitor, but delivered his address with a fluency and gracefulness that attracted especial attention and elicited rapturous applause, but perhaps his youth told against him, for the prize went to a young man from Manhattan College, greatly to the disappointment of a vast assemblage of people whose sympathies were intensely with the younger lad.

Soon after this event William Walter was sent to the private school at Golden Hill, near Bridgeport, Connecticut. This institution was conducted by Rev. Henry Jones, whose wife was the daughter of Noah Webster, the distinguished lexicographer. His advancement in his studies was so rapid that when a little over fifteen he was fitted for college. But his health, which during his whole life was never robust, became somewhat impaired, and it was then deemed advisable to keep him away from his books for a time. Consequently, for a year he remained at home in New York engaged in the study of literature. In the meantime his father removed from Waverly Place to the Madison Avenue house on Murray Hill, which then was the largest private residence in the city. William Walter Phelps inherited it and it was his winter home for some years after he became a citizen of New Jersey, and it figured with some prominence in one or two episodes of his political days.

The young man entered Yale College before he had reached his sixteenth year. Although the youngest of his class, he rose to the head of it, when the serious condition of his eyes again compelled him to forego his studies, and on the advice of an oculist he crossed the

Atlantic, landing in Ireland. He arrived there during the high tide of emigration from that country to America. Much of the time he tramped around from village to village on foot and often at night found himself sitting at a peat fire in a cabin surrounded by a group of peasants, who listened most eagerly to the tales he told of the life and future before those who should seek a home in this country. His close intercourse with the Irish people of all classes during this tour created in his breast a warm and lasting sympathy for the Irish in all their political troubles.

After spending nearly a year in travel without deriving any benefit to his eyes, young Phelps returned to Yale College determined at all hazards to pursue his studies, and employed another student to read everything to him. He had to give his undivided attention to the readings, and through this practice, it is believed, was developed that phenomenal memory that was so notable in his after-life, when he seldom forgot an incident or the most careless remark. But with all this disadvantage he was enabled to keep up with his class, and at the end of four years graduated with honor. One who knew him well in those days, and ever after, said of him: "At college his great ambition was to stand high. He was never a lazy student, and study was never onerous. He was rather more proficient in the classics than mathematics, but was no mean scholar in the mathematical branches. He did not at any time live in the college building, but was well known and popular among all the college boys, and his ever genial disposition and easy politeness made him a favorite among his classmates."

Among his classmates, who until the close of Mr. Phelps's life maintained the closest friendship and intimacy with him, was one who is now a prominent clergyman in a flourishing city. This old classmate, and no one knew more of Mr. Phelps as a collegian, in recalling the college days of his loving friend, since the latter's death, made these feeling remarks:

He was most studious and systematic in his hours for study, yet he acquired so easily, and had such an exceptionally retentive memory that apparently without excessive effort and certainly without "digging" and "grubbing" he won and maintained a place in the first rank of scholarship. He had come to college from a small preparatory school of a limited local reputation. At once he entered into successful competition with the best accredited scholars from the largest schools. Had his eyesight not failed him, necessitating his absence from college and an entire cessation of all study for a year and the consequent entrance into the next class for graduation he would no doubt probably have carried off the honors of the valedictorian. The scholarly instinct was very strong in him. He was especially proficient in the languages, finding much pleasure in the study of the Greek and Latin classics. He was a ready debater, a fluent speaker and his essays and literary productions were of a very high order.

It was very remarkable that this high standing in scholarship and excellence in general literary work should have been gained with such comparative ease, for he had abundant leisure for social pursuits and the amenities of life, evidenced by the fact that he was married in the evening of his graduation, an occasion to which all his class men were invited.

It was a serious question with him upon leaving college whether or not to devote some time at least to teaching with the view of possibly making that his life work, he was so thoroughly in love with study and with the student life. The position of tutor in the college was offered to him with the understanding that a professor's chair would in time be provided for him. It was with reluctance that he finally turned aside from this attractive pursuit to the study of the law.

In his college days there was the bright promise of what his future would be as to the *social* side of his character. He had a genius for friendship. The spirit of comradeship was born in him and college life gave ample opportunity for its manifestation and exercise. The warm friendships he then made he cherished to the end of his life, counting them the most precious of all his possessions.

Athletics did not then occupy so much of the thought and

time of college students. This is quite a modern development —the wide and intense interest in college athletics. But he never had the physical robustness to permit of any very violent exercise. He was fond of horse-back riding, always kept in New Haven a fine spirited saddle horse, and made good use of it both for recreation and health.

Such was his prominence as a scholar and such his character as an all-round Christian gentleman, that he was chosen as one of the fifteen of his class for the Senior Society of Skull and Bones, an honor recognized by his own class beyond all dispute as most richly merited. This society had then and since among its members many of the most eminent men of the country. His theme, one of the most notable essays, was this —which accords with the spirit of his college life and whole life—"Work for Work's sake—the joy and pleasure work brings." And this though a large fortune was awaiting him.

At the graduating examination Mr. Phelps was passed by John M. Morris, who got the valedictory, and Mr. Phelps took the second place and was the salutatorian. There was a story that he lost the prize on the last day on a written examination in Butler's *Analogy*. He neglected to write out a paper which would have required three or four hours' work, choosing to run the risk of a failure rather than lose a drive with the young lady to whom he was engaged. But he had the satisfaction, however, of having carried off many of the principal prizes of the college, some of which were: the Townsend premium; Bishop Barkley's prize for Latin composition; first prize for English composition; first prize for debate.

On the evening of his graduation Mr. Phelps was married to Ellen Maria, the daughter of Mr. Joseph Earle Sheffield of New Haven, the generous founder of the renowned Sheffield Scientific School of Yale College. The wedding was attended by all the classmates, and its pleasures and joyfulness were often recalled by the graduates for many years after.

The Sheffield family was an old and distinguished one in New England, and more particularly in Connecticut, and the father of Mrs. William Walter Phelps was a man whose memory will not for ages die out in this country, and none deserves more enduring fame. He was born in Southport, Connecticut, June 19, 1793. His father and grandfather were extensive shipowners, and took an active part in the War of the Revolution in a vessel commissioned by Congress, but equipped and sailed by themselves. His early education was obtained in the common schools, which he left in 1808, when hardly fifteen years of age, to become a clerk to Stephen Fowler of Newberne, North Carolina. In 1813 he formed a partnership with a house in New York, residing himself in Newberne and attending to the business in that city. He soon became one of the largest shippers of cotton in the country. He returned to Connecticut in the summer of 1835, and established himself in New Haven, which place was ever after his home. He was one of the chief projectors of the railroad between New Haven and New York, and was the founder of the New Haven and Northampton Railway Company, of which he was for many years president. In 1851 Mr. Sheffield engaged with a partner, Mr. Farnum, in the construction of the Rock Island Railroad, the beginning of what is now known as the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad. Within two years after the signing of the contract, and one year short of the time allowed, the road was finished at an expense of over $5,000,000. By the terms of the contract Mr. Sheffield and Mr. Farnum secured by the early completion of the road the right to control it up to a specified date, and to receive all its earnings. The result was found exceedingly profitable, as the earnings of the road were large, and Mr. Sheffield's ample fortune was considerably increased. After this he visited Europe, remaining two years, and after his return he continued as long as he lived an active business life, giving constantly his personal superintendence to the

various great enterprises with which he was connected. Mr. Sheffield was prominent in banking circles, being identified with a leading bank in New Haven and holding a large amount of stock in banks in New York City.

Mr. Sheffield was always a man noted for his noble-hearted charities to the needy, but is best known through his spontaneous and enormous benefactions to educational institutions. In 1846 he began the work of establishing the Scientific School which bears his name, and which is a lasting monument of his philanthropy and virtues. He also made large donations to Trinity College, Hartford, and to the Theological Seminary of the Northwest, in Chicago. From the foundation of the Scientific School up to the time of his decease his donations to that institution were continuous according to its development and needs, and in his will he left to it one seventh of his large estate.

Miss Sheffield was reared in a home of wealth and culture and although young in years when married, she had seen much of society, and consequently was well fitted, as the wife of William Walter Phelps, to become, as she did in time, the gentle and kind-hearted mistress of the far-famed Phelps homestead at Teaneck. Here were brought up her three children, two sons and a daughter. Over the extensive hospitalities of her home Mrs. Phelps presided, with an amiability and cordiality which at once put all guests at perfect ease. She inherited the beneficent traits of her father, but her many quiet charities were known to few save the recipients. Every employee at Teaneck in sickness or distress always received promptly from its mistress warm-hearted sympathy and generous help.

Shortly after their marriage Mr. and Mrs. Phelps sailed for Europe. They were absent more than a year, spending a large portion of the time in Germany. It was while on this tour that Mr. Phelps acquired much of that

knowledge of the German language, society, institutions, and government which subsequently enabled him, while in an official capacity, so readily to familiarize himself with the conditions in that country and to become at once very much liked by its rulers and people.

CHAPTER III

Studies Law at Columbia—His First Jury Case—A Successful Lawyer—Some of His Largest Cases—Declines a Seat on the New York Bench and Settles in New Jersey

ON his return to New York Mr. Phelps entered the Columbia Law School. Here he must have been a most painstaking and diligent student. Records left by him show that he made full notes of the lectures and read the text-books with great care and thoughtfulness. Besides, he read closely all of the current decisions of the appellate courts with comments upon them, and he watched and made memoranda of all the important trials that were taking place in the courts at that date. Before he was admitted to practice he had a law office, an ample law library, and was acquiring quite a large legal business. He was giving particular attention to commercial law, as he was expecting to make a specialty of that branch of legal practice.

In the meantime he and Mrs. Phelps were living happily with his father at the Murray Hill home on Madison Avenue. On the first day of January, 1862, he made this entry in his diary:

A rainy, cloudy day. I started later than usual to make my calls. Of course alone. I made about the usual list. The day was not generally celebrated as in past years. Mourning in many for lost friends or property in these days of war cloud closed many hospitable doors that were wont to be open to graceful hospitality. It became windy and dark by the time I reached the Hill on my return, so I lost heart to further

continue my visits and came home to rest. Our presents were very acceptable. We found them ranged by our plates at the breakfast table, and had a merry time inspecting the gifts of each. What hard work it is to gather these little memorials: there are so many pretty objects to choose among and so many different tastes. But procrastination in this as in everything else is the fruitful source of perplexity. If one only started in season he might by gradual acquisition through the autumn create and complete a circle of gifts that would satisfy himself and friends without one half the bother of the after Christmas searching.

In January, 1862, Horatio Seymour was inaugurated as Governor of the State of New York and Mr. Phelps, already on the alert for business advantages, wrote the Governor a letter which read:

I beg leave to suggest my name to his Excellency in any nominations he may hereafter make to the office of notary public for the City and County of New York. Aware that the legislature has limited the number of these offices, I should deem myself under greater obligations did your Excellency see fit to send my name to the Senate.

This is among the first records of Mr. Phelps's business career, and it affords an apt illustration of the remarkably concise style that was so easily at his command in all his correspondence. A young man, however, he fell into the common error of conferring upon governors and high officials in this country the title of "Excellency," a usage that he soon learned most carefully to avoid. It is probable that his request was not granted by the Governor. But it is worthy of mention that this small office was the only public appointment ever solicited by a man who afterward had bestowed upon him so many high official positions.

As might be expected, Mr. Phelps was graduated with the highest honors in the class of 1863, and delivered the valedictory at the Law Commencement. He at once

began practice as a full-fledged lawyer at his office in Exchange Place. An amusing story was published in the newspapers descriptive of his first jury trial. It was as follows:

The client of the young lawyer was a young woman who claimed that the landlord of a house in which she had lodged had called after her one night as she entered her room, "There goes a thief." The defendant denied the accusation and witness after witness was produced, till the Court refused to listen to another, all testifying positively that they had heard everything, and nothing of the kind was said. The case looked desperate, the young woman's attorney had nothing but his single interested witness to prove his side of the case. The opposing attorney, with an assumption of indignation at the evident untruthfulness of the plaintiff, grew exceedingly sharp in his cross-examination, and plied question after question, until, overstepping the bounds of common decency, he was interrupted by Mr. Phelps, who, with the conventional anger of a practised barrister, called on the Court to protect his client. With conventional indifference the Judge refused and allowed the defendant's attorney to continue, until the plaintiff burst into tears and Mr. Phelps's indignation grew speechless. The case was closed, and in one sentence the Judge charged that there was really no evidence on the side of the prosecution. The jury went out and Mr. Phelps sat down expecting nothing after the charge of the Judge but a verdict for the defendant. But very much to his surprise the jury in a very few moments returned and rendered a verdict of fifty dollars damages to the plaintiff. The Judge in indignation immediately ordered the court to be adjourned. Mr. Phelps while gathering up his papers was approached by the foreman, who said: "We did n't believe he called her a thief, and we did n't believe that you expected any damages, but you were so good-natured that we thought we would give you damages enough to make the costs."

This ended his first experience on his first jury trial, and it is said that he never failed to get a verdict from a jury in any case that he ever tried.

Very few of those who knew him in his later days are aware of his close application to his profession in the beginning of his legal practice. He would day after day take a late dinner at the English Chop House on Pine Street, west of Broadway, known as "Old Tom's," the resort of merchants, brokers, and lawyers in those years, and then go back to his office down town and work until late in the evening. The result of this yielding so wholly to the demands of his profession was that at the age of twenty-five he found himself in the possession of a large office in which he employed several assistants and had all the business to which he could well give attention. He was counsel for Moses Taylor, George Bliss, Marshall O. Roberts, Amos R. Eno, and many corporations of which he afterwards became a manager, including the United States Trust Company. He, about this time, took part in a litigation which gained for him much reputation. It was connected with the failure of the firm of Morris, Ketchum & Co., the great government bankers in the early part of the Civil War. The son of the senior partner had fled, taking with him nearly all of the securities that were lodged with the firm by its customers. He was subsequently arrested and brought to trial. Mr. Phelps was the leading counsel for the defence and made a plea for the criminal which attracted great attention and favorable public comment. The questions involved in this litigation were intricate and vigorously contested. For one argument, which was reported verbatim in the daily journals, Mr. Phelps received a fee of $10,000.

Connected with his legal work at this period was a proceeding that Mr. Phelps always looked back to with great pride and satisfaction as one of the most creditable of his early triumphs. It was a contest by his sister's father-in-law, William E. Dodge, against James Brooks, Sr., for a seat in the national House of Representatives. The election was in 1864, when the conditions growing out of the Civil War were at their worst, and the Democratic

National Convention of that year had denounced the war for the restoration of the Union a "failure." New York City was the stronghold in the North of all those who sympathized with the South and opposed the war policy of the national administration. Mr. Lincoln had been nominated for re-election, and in the Eighth Congressional District of New York City a candidate was sought who could rally to his support all the Union voters of whatever party, and the leaders selected William E. Dodge. He was a prominent merchant, of the most exalted character, unquestioned ability, and fervent patriotism. He was enlightened on all the issues of the day, and withal a good public speaker. His Democratic opponent was Mr. James Brooks, who had already held the seat for three terms and was the recognized Democratic leader in Congress, where he was the champion of the "rights of the South." He was also editor of a New York daily newspaper, and was skilled in all the tactics of New York Democratic politics. The nomination of Mr. Dodge was made but a few days before the election. He accepted with reluctance, as he had little taste for official life, but yielded in this instance to a sense of duty. The leading citizens residing in his district supported him with vigor and the patriotic voters rallied at the polls with enthusiasm. The total vote of the district was twenty-two thousand and the returns to the police headquarters on the night of the election gave Mr. Dodge a plurality of more than seven hundred votes. The reports of the Associated Press elected Mr. Brooks by about one hundred and fifty, the Democrats having control of the canvassing of the votes and of the election machinery. Mr. Brooks was given the certificate of election. The irregularities at the polls were well known, and it was evident that there had been fraud in the count and juggling of the returns. Those who had supported Mr. Dodge and the Republicans throughout the country urged him to contest the election and he finally consented. He selected for his attorney William Walter

Phelps, who put all of his energies into the management of the case. He collected testimony with great industry, arranging it and presenting it to the court in the most telling shape. Those who were present at the court where the testimony was taken pronounced his cross-examination of opposing witnesses as exceedingly shrewd and tactful.

The evidence on the part of Mr. Dodge filled a volume of over five hundred pages, and it proved conclusively a conspiracy to secure by any means the return of the Democratic nominee, and showed beyond all reasonable doubt fraudulent registration, illegal voting, false returns, violations of the election law by the election officers, as well as bribery of voters and corruption without stint. The taking of the testimony occupied six weeks, and at the opening of Congress in December, 1865, the papers were presented and the case referred to the Committee on Elections. Mr. Brooks as a sitting member had the advantage in the privilege of being present at all the discussions. He was a plausible talker, was skilled in the use of parliamentary expedients and familiar with all the devices to delay action on any proceedings. He had been the Democratic candidate for Speaker of that Congress, and was very popular with his party, who stood by him to a man. He formulated numerous charges against his opponent, his case occupying nine hundred pages of printed matter. The delays were vexatious, but the committee finally made its report, finding that Mr. Brooks had not proven any of his charges against the contestant and that the latter was entitled to the disputed seat, and the House, on April 6, 1866, passed a resolution seating Mr. Dodge, who was immediately sworn in. The leading incidents of this contest have been derived from the *Memorial of William E. Dodge*, compiled by his son, Rev. Dr. D. Stuart Dodge.

At this time Reuben E. Fenton had become Governor of the State of New York. He had heard of the rising young lawyer in the city and an intimate and lasting ac-

quaintance grew up between them. The Governor tendered to Mr. Phelps a seat on the bench, but the offer, flattering as it was, Mr. Phelps declined, as its acceptance would interfere with other projects he had in mind regarding his future. He had never liked the city as a place of residence. He began to look for a rural home, and much persuasion was used by friends and acquaintances to have him settle in their respective localities, and even very promising inducements were held out to him by those whom he had met to "go West." He finally fixed upon a place in Bergen County, New Jersey, for a summer home, expecting to live during the winter season in the city so long, at least, as his father should live. The property he selected and purchased was a farm of moderate size on which there was an old-fashioned Dutch farmhouse. It was situated at what was called Teaneck Ridge, on the highway leading from Englewood to Hackensack, about two miles from the first-named village, and a little more distant from Hackensack, the county seat. It was the "Old Garrit Brinkerhoff Homestead" of Revolutionary days. Mr. Phelps began making additions to the house for the comfort and convenience of the family, keeping up strictly the old Dutch style of architecture. It was his intention at first to erect at his convenience a handsome mansion of the modern style, but the birth of his daughter, Marian, which took place at the old farmhouse, so endeared it to the hearts of himself and Mrs. Phelps that he determined that it should stand and to transform it into a most picturesque cottage. His efforts were successful, and the old farm building became thenceforth widely known as Teaneck Grange. A more detailed description of this structure when finished will be given farther on in this book. Adjacent farms were bought year after year, until the original purchase was obscured by the broad estate that grew around it, reaching from the Hackensack to the Hudson, a distance of nearly five miles, and embracing quite two thousand acres.

In the years following Mr. Phelps's location of Teaneck, he gave to the development of his country estate, and particularly to road improvement in that vicinity, all the time he could spare from his busy law office in the city. He had a great and natural love for acreage and would look with the pride of ownership over the fair lands of his home so far as sight carried—lands that had belonged to others in past generations, but now were his to improve and beautify. The wide and rolling fields, the vivid green of the meadows, the blue range of the Palisades beyond, and the cottages of his dependants half hidden by the trees, all delighted him, and love for this rural abode increased with every year.

CHAPTER IV

His Large Business Interests Compel Him to Give up His Law Practice—Builds Railroads and Acquires Land in Texas—Enters New Jersey Politics and Becomes a "Favorite Son"—Famous Paramus Convention—Elected to Congress

MR. PHELPS'S father died in 1869 and bequeathed to his son a very large property just at a time when the latter was reaching to the highest prizes of his profession. The cares incident upon the management of his inherited estate and the unavoidable assumption of weighty responsibilities for others demanded so much of his time and strength that very shortly he was compelled to withdraw regretfully from active practice at the bar and give his whole attention to his private affairs.

About this time also he began to feel strongly the attractions of public life and to realize the possibilities of the service and distinction which politics offered to a man of his capabilities and position. These were the stormy days of the Reconstructive period. Mr. Phelps from the start was conscientiously a Republican; the patriotism and intense Americanism of that party strongly attracted him. He believed most sincerely that upon the policy of the Republican party depended financial stability, mercantile and industrial prosperity, and all that labor had to hope for in the equalization of the human lot and correcting the apparent injustice of nature. He observed that the Republican party usually consulted the conservative yet progressive public sentiment without veering to the gale of popular clamor, while in his view the

opposite party was apt to change its attitude and policy at every election.

He became a legal resident of New Jersey in 1867, and took an interest in all the public affairs of his own and neighboring localities, forming many feasible plans for improvements. His genial disposition and sprightly manners made him quickly acquainted with the people of all kinds. In going to and fro on the New York trains he met a high class of business men living in Englewood and all along the Northern Railroad valley, and it was not long before his name became a familiar one throughout Bergen County. Numbered among his new friends were many of the Republican leaders of Bergen County, who caught the idea that he would be a good and available man to be brought into political prominence, and they laid their plans accordingly.

Until this time Mr. Phelps had taken only a modest part in a few local political gatherings, but began to be spoken of as the "rising young man from Bergen County." His first real entrance into the politics of New Jersey, in which he was destined in future to play so prominent a part, was when he was sent as a delegate to the convention of the Fourth Congressional District of the State, held at Paterson in the autumn of 1870. The district at that time included Bergen, Passaic, Morris, and Sussex counties, and the townships which were called "the Oranges," in Essex County. It was the design of Mr. Phelps's friends here to introduce him to the district by making him the permanent presiding officer of the convention. There were difficulties in carrying out this plan, as the convention was a large one and there were others ambitious for the position. The Bergen candidate, with the exception of a small body of ardent admirers from Sussex, was not largely known outside of his own county. But the Committee on Organization reported Mr. Phelps's name and on taking the chair he delivered an address which was a surprise to all on account of its inspiriting

eloquence and thorough exposition of the issues that were foremost in the campaign of that year. John Hill, of Morris County, a man of the highest personal and political integrity and standing, had held the seat from that district for two terms and seemed to be booked by the party managers for another nomination. But Mr. Phelps's speech had aroused for him so much enthusiasm and popular applause that a strong inclination arose on the part of many delegates to put his name before the convention for the nomination. This Mr. Phelps would not permit, but there was a reported understanding among various party leaders from the district that the Bergen County man should be the next candidate without opposition from Mr. Hill or his friends. At this convention, too, he made the acquaintance of several active and influential men of his party, who remained ever after his warm personal friends and safe political advisers. Mr. Hill was elected after a close contest. Mr. Phelps gave valuable aid to the Republican cause in this campaign and at its close had become well known and had gained unlimited popularity throughout the district.

Mr. Phelps's slight dip into the bubbling political cauldron did not divert him from legitimate business enterprises. In 1870, with several other New York capitalists and financiers, he became interested in the development of railroads in Texas. At that time the State of Texas had few if any railroads, little money, a doubtful credit, and a great deal of land. One or two enterprising citizens of the State had secured from the legislature soon after the Civil War immense grants of land for building certain specified railroads. There was also provided in the legislative grants a subsidy per mile to be paid in money. The roads with their branches were to extend through the most populous sections of the State, connecting the chief cities—one of them to connect in the northern part of the State with a line running south from St. Louis. A misunderstanding arose between the

original projectors and the State officials as to the terms of payment of the subsidies, and the builders of the road were unable to carry on the work. It was then that the aid of Northern capital was sought, and Mr. Phelps and others, including Moses Taylor, William E. Dodge, and John J. Cisco, were induced to advance capital to carry on these enterprises, taking in security land, stocks, and mortgage bonds. With this financial aid the railroads in question were finished, and the companies were consolidated into one, which is now known as the International and Great Northern Railroad Company. But further complications ensued with the State, partially through antagonisms of its officials, and also through adverse acts of the legislature, which repudiated obligations created by previous legislatures. This enmity and bad faith displayed toward those whose money had built the roads existed despite the fact that the people, and especially the agriculturists of the vast sections which the roads opened up, were immensely benefited and the value of their property enormously increased. The road was forced into the hands of a receiver and sold, becoming a part of the Gould system, which now extends from St. Louis to the City of Mexico. Mr. Phelps in the settlement of affairs exchanged his large holding of second-mortgage bonds for the lands which had been granted to the company in the Pan-Handle and Western part of the State. Thus was acquired by Mr. Phelps and some of his associates three millions or more of acres of land, then of no great cash value. In 1880 Mr. Phelps was chiefly instrumental in organizing the New York and Texas Land Company, of which he was the largest stockholder. His interest in this company, what was thought at one time to be a doubtful financial venture, resulted in creating a very valuable asset of his estate. He always had an abiding confidence in the ultimate profitableness of real-estate holdings, and this acquisition of Texas acres, and holding them so tenaciously in his grasp all through the

hard panic times of 1874 is a striking instance of his business prudence and foresight.

In 1872 there was an election for President. General Grant was a candidate for re-election, and a new Congress was to be chosen. The census of 1870 had made necessary a Congressional re-districting, therefore a new district in New Jersey, designated as the Fifth was created, comprising the counties of Bergen, Morris, and Passaic. It had been known for two years that Mr. Phelps would this time be brought forward by his admirers and friends for the Republican nomination. There was opposition, for Mr. Hill was desirous of still further service. He had supporters in Morris and Passaic counties, who denied any knowledge of an understanding two years previously that Mr. Hill should step aside at this election for the Bergen County favorite. Nor in Bergen was the field quite clear. Some of the old party leaders there thought that Mr. Phelps was too new a man in the county to entitle him to a nomination for so important an office, while others raised the objection that he was too young. There were other prominent citizens of that county who aspired to a seat in Congress and placed themselves in opposition to the young lawyer. One was General Thomas B. Van Buren, who had married a sister of Mrs. Phelps, and who had become a resident of Teaneck. He was a man of impressive personal appearance, great ambition, and an effective public speaker. He was later United States Commissioner to the Vienna Exposition, and for many years Consul-General at Yokohama, Japan. The other opponent to Mr. Phelps was Charles H. Voorhis, a talented lawyer, practising in Hackensack. He was from an old Bergen County family of large connections, and was well known in every section of the county, a sarcastic talker, and a very keen politician. Spirited and persevering efforts were made by each of the contestants to secure delegates from Bergen County. It was then the custom in that

county for the Republicans to select delegates to nominating bodies through a mass convention of the party called to meet at some designated place. The voters thus assembling from the respective townships there conferred together, and after making their selection of delegates, reported them to the mass convention. This practice resulted in 1872 in one of the most memorable political gatherings ever held in the county and has come down in local history as the "famous Paramus Convention." It was called at Union Hall, Paramus, a somewhat inaccessible spot. It was a pleasant, mellow, September afternoon. There came crowds on foot, and adherents of the rival candidates arrived from all parts of the county in carriages, express wagons, furniture carts, and other vehicles, some of which were decorated with flags. On the ground the excitement was intense. The convention, after going through the formalities of organization in the hall, adjourned for an hour to give the various townships time to select their delegates. Forthwith there was a great rush out-of-doors and shouts of "Saddle River this way," "Englewood under the apple tree," "Lodi on the left," "Union here by the fence," "Ridgefield along the road," and so on through all the townships—there were only twelve at that time and no boroughs. The late Judge William S. Banta of Hackensack stood on the tail end of a farm wagon taking votes, using his hat as a ballot box. It was soon evident that Mr. Phelps's partisans were not only more numerous, but better organized. Ridgefield township, which included Fort Lee, had over three hundred representatives, and among these was a spirited opposition to Mr. Phelps, inspired by a strong local leader who wished to head a delegation of his own followers. The Phelps voters were arrayed on one side of the road, their antagonists directly opposite. There was an exciting time and as a result contesting delegates presented themselves to the convention, and a tumult ensued. The delegates from Ridge-

field favoring Mr. Phelps were admitted by an overwhelming vote, which assured him all the delegates to the Congressional convention except four who were claimed by Mr. Voorhis. General Van Buren had withdrawn his name in the early part of the proceedings.

Space has been given to this convention because it was there that Mr. Phelps had his first real experience in partisan strife, and there also was made sensible, as never before, of that misrepresentation and calumny which, it is sad to say, but few who are named for political positions ever escape, however pure their motive or upright their conduct. It is worthy of note that the most ardent champions of Mr. Phelps at this outset of his political career were young men whose energy and enthusiasm contributed largely to his success, and subsequently in all his political contests he could rally around him the younger voters of his party, toward whom in turn he was always ready to extend a helping hand.

Mr. Hill's friends made a vigorous effort for him in Passaic County and elected a majority of the delegates, but at the preliminary proceedings of the convention his own county of Morris did not stand by him with anything like unanimity, consequently he withdrew from the contest. Mr. Voorhis, on the contrary, kept up the fight and sought to bring to his side the delegates chosen for Mr. Hill. The effort was fruitless, for when the vote was taken in the convention Mr. Phelps was the choice of each of the three counties, the total vote being seventy-three to thirty-two, the announcement of which was received with much popular applause. The nominee was brought before the convention and accepted the nomination in a brief speech during which he alluded in complimentary terms to Mr. Hill, and expressed his thanks for the honor which had been done him and Bergen County. He dwelt upon the general issues of the campaign and indicated his own course should he be elected, assuring his hearers that he should always be found faithful to the

Republican party and its principles. He had never been anything but a Republican, and he hoped to die a Republican, for the Republican party would live so long as there remained a governmental wrong to be righted.

Having been once launched on the troublous sea of political candidacy, Mr. Phelps threw himself heart and soul into the campaign. He spoke at mass meetings in all the counties of the district and attended the local conventions, which gave him an opportunity to come in direct contact with the active men of the party. He was heartily received by the German organizations and addressed the members of the French Club at Paterson in their own tongue. As an undeniably rich man he was a most conspicuous object of attack by the Democratic journals of demagogic tendencies. His private character was conceded to be irreproachable, but he was charged with almost everything else likely to militate against one who is solicitating popular suffrage. His neatness and peculiarities of dress caused him to be held up as a dude. It was said that he was an interloper and a carpet-bagger, and, although he was a large property holder and taxpayer, it was contended that he was really a New Yorker who had no interest in the people or industries of the district, and an aristocrat too proud to mingle with the common people. But the voters as they became acquainted with the Republican candidate soon found out what was the fact, that he was a man of true democratic sentiments, who never paraded his wealth in his associations with his fellow-men and that unstudied politeness and urbanity were invariably shown to all—high and low, rich and poor.

The Democratic candidate was Col. Absalom B. Woodruff, a well-known lawyer and afterwards judge, who up to this time had been a Republican, but for some reason had suddenly gone over to the other side, where he was welcomed by a Congressional nomination. He was not a polished or eloquent speaker, but he talked fluently, and in a controversy had a habit of selecting a few prom-

inent points on his side and then testing their utmost malleability, a style that he found very taking with many of his auditors. One of his constant iterations during the campaign was that his opponent was not a resident of the State. Mr. Phelps in those years lived for a few weeks each winter in his New York house, and for this reason his name was recorded in the directory of the city long after he became a citizen of New Jersey. Colonel Woodruff, in taking full advantage of this fact, at a large mass meeting had piled up at his side ten huge New York directories dating from 1863 to 1872, and taking them up one after the other read amid bursts of laughter from his audience: "Phelps, W. W., lawyer, 26 Exchange Place, house, 219 Madison Avenue."

Colonel Woodruff had also the support of a political faction known as "Liberal Republicans," which through dissatisfaction with General Grant's administration had split from the Republican party and joined with the Democrats in trying to elect Mr. Greeley for President.

Few men who ever had the good or bad fortune to be the nominee of a political party were more mercilessly vilified than was Mr. Phelps in this struggle. Stories were published that he was an oppressive employer, paying the numerous workmen on his estate the most niggardly wages, and treating them like serfs. Emissaries were sent from Paterson to induce those in his employ to tell a tale of woe that could be used for political effect. These envoys came back with the story that all they could get was the united testimony of these workmen that their wages were satisfactory and that Mr. Phelps was the kindest and most considerate of employers, treating all in his service in such a manner that they were always glad to do anything to please him.

The long and harassing canvass came at last to an end, and Mr. Phelps's reward for all that he had gone through was the gratifying vote of the district; Mr. Phelps, 12,701; Woodruff, 8986.

CHAPTER V

Takes His Seat in the Forty-third Congress—A Personal Description—James G. Blaine Becomes His Friend—Comes Quickly to the Front as a Parliamentary Orator and Debater—Denounces the Famous "Salary Grab"—Energetic Speech Against the Franking Privilege Abuses—A Parliamentary Tilt with a Kansas Granger

WHEN Mr. Phelps, in December, 1873, started for Washington to begin his work in Congress he was accompanied to the railroad station in Jersey City by his intimate personal friend, Charles Nordhoff of the New York *Evening Post*, who there introduced him to the veteran Representative from Vermont, Judge Lake A. Poland, with a request that the latter should take the young member under his wing and see him safely over the first stages of his strange life. The charge was cheerfully accepted, and accompanying his venerable protector, Mr. Phelps soon found himself seated in a parlor car flying towards Washington. The youthful member was naturally anxious to make a good impression on the Vermont veteran and talked away in his most entertaining manner. He did not know then that Harriet Beecher Stowe and Mary Clemmer Ames were near him, but the next week found it out by the following, which the former published in the New York *Independent*:

William Walter Phelps, the new young member from the desert of New Jersey, has the reputation of owning more railroads than I can take time to count. That he is a most loquacious gentleman I can bear witness, for, coming to Washington in the same car with him, I decided that he talked

faster and longer than any masculine mortal I ever beheld, and concluded that he was a wild Bohemian just let loose from his lair on his way to the capital, to write up "Injun" story chronicles of Congress. Instead he is one of the menagerie himself, and threw off from that flying tongue of his, the other day, a very bright speech, which made everybody laugh, even when translated to the newspapers—a very stern test.

Mr. Phelps fairly entered upon his career in national politics when he took his seat in the House of Representatives at the opening of the Forty-third Congress, and voted for Mr. Blaine, who was elected Speaker. Although unacquainted with nearly all the members of that House, he was by no means an obscure personality. A newspaper fame based upon many interesting incidents of his canvass for election and a knowledge of his standing and reputation in the great city of New York had preceded him. In the brief biography of the members published in the *Congressional Directory* of that session, this was said of the Representative from the Fifth District of New Jersey:

Wm. Walter Phelps, of Englewood, was born at Dundaff, Susquehanna County, Pennsylvania, August 24, 1839; was graduated at Yale College in 1860 with high honors; afterward he pursued his studies in Europe, and later at Columbia College Law School of New York, where he received the valedictory appointment of his class; then entered immediately upon the practice of law; he is a director of the National City Bank and Second National Bank of New York, the United States Trust Company, and Farmers' Loan and Trust Company; also in the following railroad companies, namely: Delaware, Lackawanna and Western, Oswego and Syracuse, Syracuse and Binghamton, Cayuga and Susquehanna, International of Texas, Houston and Great Northern, New Haven and Northampton, Morris and Essex, and others; he was elected Fellow of Yale College in July, 1872.

Mr. Phelps was then thirty-four years of age and the following not inaccurate personal description of him as

he appeared at the beginning of this term was written by one of the renowned journalists of those days:

Mr. Phelps is just five feet nine and a half inches tall and weighs about 170 pounds. He is lithe of limb and very active, and walks with a live, springy step. His face is refined and handsome, with a wide, grasping, intellectual forehead, and we think he has the finest eyes of any man in Congress. They are large, well set, and of a beautiful hazel hue—a Tom Moore eye. They are not hard. They are kind and tender and have penetrating honesty in their gentle gaze, and they seem to reflect in a sympathetic way your own thoughts when conversing with him. There is a light that falls between you and the inner light of those glorious eyes, and that light reflects the soul—a soul plain to your sight as noonday's sun.

Mr. Phelps's manner is simple, gracious and winning, and in pleasing harmony with his thoughts, and he never utters a platitude. Patient, industrious and resigned, he is a model of the highest type of culture.

The young Representative from New Jersey at the outset had before him the task of winning fame in a legislative body which had among its members an unusual number of very strong men, a few of whom were. Benjamin F. Butler, Samuel J. Randall, William D. Kelley, Stephen B. Elkins, Clarkson N Potter, Henry L. Dawes, George F. Hoar, Fernando Wood, Daniel W. Voorhees, James A. Garfield, Charles Foster, Samuel S. Cox, James H. Beck, Levi P. Morton, Joseph R. Hawley, William P. Frye.

The real work of the session did not begin until after the holiday vacation, but the standing committees of the House were immediately announced at this session. Mr. Phelps was given a place on the Committee on Banking and Currency, with one exception the most important committee of that House, which was a very high compliment to be paid a first-session member. But he had for ten years previously given diligent study to questions

of currency, revenue, tariffs, and internal taxation, and his extensive acquaintance and his associations with financiers in New York had so well equipped him for the consideration of all financial questions that he was able to give assistance to the oldest and most experienced members of his committee.

James G. Blaine, the Speaker of the House, was then young, aggressive, and brilliant, guiding all the proceedings of the body over which he presided with masterly skill and dash. No public man exceeded him in intuitive knowledge of the ability men possessed to advance themselves and the capacity they had to aid him, and he was endowed with a foresight into the political future that was almost miraculous. He was not long in discovering in this New Jersey Representative a successful young lawyer, ambitious, with money and energy, who would be likely to make his mark in politics and statesmanship. He learned, too, that one of Mr. Phelps's most distinguishing traits was an unfailing loyalty to his friends which never stinted either service or money. A much less shrewd man than Mr. Blaine would quickly have seized the opportunity to tie such a young man to his fortunes. How he succeeded and what it was worth to him is partly known, for in after-years, when Mr. Blaine needed the service, Mr. Phelps more than requited him for all the favors received from the Speaker's chair. The social intimacy between these two able men became very close, and the New Jersey member was a welcome visitor daily and at all hours at the Speaker's historic house on Fifteenth Street, and nothing of a social or political nature transpired in which they were not together. Thus grew that ardent and sincere mutual friendship which prompted these distinguished public men to afford each other powerful assistance for the rest of their lives.

Mr. Phelps was not long in getting into the harness. The Congress just previous had passed a salary bill which had increased the compensation of the President, United

States Senators, Representatives in Congress, Judges of the Supreme Court, and some other high officials. This increase of compensation was not so much objected to by the country as the provisions the bill contained that allowed those benefited to claim back pay for a certain specified date, and in this way members of Congress had voted themselves several thousand dollars each, that they were not entitled to during their time of service. A few renounced this back pay at once; others awaited an expression of public opinion; while those who were bolder and more rapacious drew their back pay as soon as the bill became a law. The President had no sooner signed the bill than a storm of indignation broke out all over the country. All who had voted for the measure were denounced by the newspapers of all parties as "back-pay grabbers" and despoilers of the public treasury. During the Congressional interim, State legislatures, political conventions, and public gatherings of all kinds demanded a repeal of the obnoxious law.

As soon as the House of the Forty-third Congress was organized, bills were introduced to repeal what was stigmatized as the "salary grab" measure, and there followed a flood of amendments providing for various modifications and compromises, rather than a repeal of the entire law.

The proceedings in the House were momentous, and the action to be taken would be of vital importance to the Republicans, public sentiment having made a Republican Congress responsible for the odious enactment. All the giants of both parties in the House took part in the discussion. The law sought to be repealed was not wholly bad; the increase of the salary of the President from $25,000 to $50,000 a year and the addition to the pay of the Supreme Court Judges were right and proper. The difficulty was in making a just discrimination.

It was held to be hardly in good form for a new member to talk during his first session. But the young

Jerseyman had no intention to serve any sort of an apprenticeship designed by the unwritten rules of the House. On December 8th, only a week from the beginning of the session, when Mr. Phelps arose and the Speaker announced "the gentleman from New Jersey has the floor," the old members turned in their seats to look at the new Representative who had the temerity to ignore the time-honored usage of the House, and the newspaper reporters in the gallery sharpened their pencils and made ready to chasten in their reports a neophyte who had assumed that he was qualified to enter at once upon the full discharge of his duties. The new member from New Jersey showed no sign of embarrassment. His voice was not deep nor strong, but clear and distinct, and could be easily heard. His manner was deliberate and argumentative, and it was soon discovered that his knowledge of the matters under consideration was superior to that of some of the members of far more experience who had already spoken in that discussion. He contended for a thorough reform of the system of compensation to Senators and Representatives; that all "back pay" not already drawn should be refunded to the treasury; that the franking privilege should be abolished; the mileage abuse rectified; that the pay of the members should be a certain fixed sum, without allowances for stationery, newspapers, or mileage, except the actual amount paid for transportation. He argued for the retention of the increase to the salaries of the President, members of the Cabinet, and Judges of the Supreme Court. He did not attempt a pretentious address, only spoke incidentally in the course of the debate, but with a force and clearness and precision of statement that created surprise on the floor and commanded the admiration of the reporters in the gallery. After this he never addressed the House without at the very start catching the attentive ear of the newspaper men, who always found that he had something to say worth reporting. He was on his feet less than

fifteen minutes, but in that time made his mark as a parliamentary speaker and debater of the highest grade.

Immediately after the passage of the reconstructed salary bill, an attempt was made to restore the former franking privilege, with all the old abuses, which were part of a law repealed by a previous Congress. This was to be done under the guise of a bill for the "distribution of public documents, seeds, and the free circulation of newspapers in the mail in counties where published." It was claimed that these concessions were in the interest of farmers, country editors, and the people generally. This measure was strenuously advocated by the members from the West especially, who courted the favor of the "Grangers," then an organization of much power. The debates in the House were animated and there was much dodging by those who really wanted a renewal of the franking abuses, but wished to escape the odium of assisting in the revival. When the bill was under discussion on February 14th, Mr. Phelps attacked it in a speech which became memorable for its humor, pungency, and sarcasm. He demonstrated that its provisions were contrary to all the Republican pledges of economy, and their enactment would fasten upon the country an uncalled-for expense for the distribution of public documents that very few wanted. He held up to ridicule and scorn the practice of members in franking of government documents and seeds. His entire speech, while argumentative, was enlivened with sparkling wit and the keenest irony. No more genuinely humorous speech was ever delivered in Congress and he fairly ridiculed the franking clauses of the bill into utter contempt and defeat. (This, with other speeches of Mr. Phelps, will be found in an Appendix to this volume.)

The next day, Mr. Cobb of Kansas, a ready talker of considerable eloquence, who essayed to be a champion of the Western agriculturists, and who was somewhat of a chronic office holder, sought to neutralize the effect of

the Jerseyman's caustic address by assailing him with gross personalities. On the floor he taunted Mr. Phelps with being an investor in speculative enterprises, a director in banks and other capitalistic corporations, a defender of railroads, and therefore he was an enemy of the farmers and land workers of the country. He read from the *Congressional Directory* the New Jersey member's record to sustain his assertions. No one was ever more tolerant of personal criticism than Mr. Phelps, but his financial doctrines and his business relations had been so palpably misrepresented that he thought the tirade of the Kansas man called for some notice. He embraced the first opportunity that came the next morning to make a response to his critics, and he spoke in a more serious but not less caustic manner than on the day previous. He did not deny his connection with railroads, nor that he was their defender when he thought they were unjustly assailed, and in his reply to his assailant he said:

He has found facts, and read them from the *Congressional Directory*, in which there were extracts from the New Jersey *Legislative Manual*. With the propriety of the method with which he constructed that portion of his argument, I find no fault. If it suits him it suits me. . . . But why did not the gentleman, when he was presenting that record, say something like this: "It is a disgrace to this member of the House that he has secured these positions. It is a disgrace to this member that widows and orphans have been willing to trust him with their funds. It is a disgrace in my State, and in other States, that he buried his money in railways which made the country rich, and which have left him poor. But it is proper to say that when he had done all these disgraceful acts, still when the people of his district sent him to Congress, he announced publicly his misfortune." If it be a disgrace to be a director of trust companies and of banks; if it be a disgrace to be a director of railroad and express companies; if it be wicked and contrary to the spirit of American institutions that I should endeavor by thrift and honesty to accumulate

that property for which others toil, yet I take the credit that I made a clean breast of it. My friend from Kansas might at least have done me that justice. A friend suggests that it might be proper to review the record of the gentleman from Kansas.

Take the book. There is nothing in it of which he need be ashamed. I find that instead of wasting his time in increasing the material interests of this country, instead of building railroads, or establishing banks, or doing anything of that disreputable, but humble and useful kind; but wiser than I, he preferred, as a non-producer, to continually feed at different corners of the public crib. The gentleman's record, therefore, was different from mine. I earned my own support; he took his from the people. I labored every day to accumulate that material wealth which is the secret of a new country's development and growth; he chose in a politic way, to use in a proper manner the wealth which others had accumulated. It is no disgrace to me, that, having a taste for material interests, I chose to labor for the development of the country; neither is it any disgrace to him that, having a taste and capacity for public life, he went into it and from his majority has held office.

This felicitous retort, which is only quoted briefly here, and its pertinent criticism of the Kansas Representative, was so disconcerting to the latter that he hurriedly abandoned the offensive, but retreated in good order with the following pleasant remarks about his opponent:

I want to say to the gentleman from New Jersey that I never intended to arraign him in the slightest degree because he held these positions. I honor him for what he acquired; I honor him for his ability displayed upon this floor; I honor him for his general ability and for his distinction as a man. No man on this floor goes before me in respect for the gentleman from New Jersey; but I called attention to a fact which I believed I had a right to do; and when I saw the representative of an enormous number of these corporations rising upon this floor and arraigning the grangers of the West, I thought it my duty to myself and my constituents to say that he ought not to do

it. I did it without any intention to insult, and without intending any offence at all to the gentleman from New Jersey.

It is hardly necessary to say that after this no one in the Forty-third Congress tried to crush out the young man from New Jersey.

This forensic duel between the Kansas and New Jersey Representatives had a rather happy sequel. Mr. Cobb was unpopular with a faction of his own party at home and the opposition to him was bitter and unscrupulous. His enemies collected a cubic foot of newspaper clippings, affidavits, judicial records, etc., which it was expected would annihilate Mr. Cobb's political career, and all this mass was sent by express to his New Jersey antagonist, with a very earnest request that Mr. Phelps would use the contents "to give old Cobb" a merciless excoriation. Mr. Phelps glanced at the enclosures and without reading immediately sent them to Mr. Cobb's lodgings with this note:

Mr. Phelps regrets that Colonel Cobb has such base constituents; he regrets still more that they should think Mr. Phelps base enough to use such material.

The Kansas member sought out his late adversary without delay, thanked him gratefully, and as long as he lived, Mr. Phelps had no warmer friend than Stephen Alonzo Cobb, who, despite his varied record, was popular among the frontiersmen, and although he lost his seat in Congress, he was kept in office as Mayor, Assemblyman, and State Senator to the end of his days.

CHAPTER VI

Takes a Leading Part on the Currency Question and Gains Fame for His Clear Exposition of a False Currency—Opposes the Civil Rights Bill and Loses Caste with His Party—Urges the Repeal of the Infamous Moiety Law—Review of His First Session—Defeated for Re-election in a Democratic Tidal Wave—Felicitous Correspondence with His Successful Opponent

THE legislative appropriation bill of this session was a very complicated affair, involving not only questions of expenditures, but of collecting the revenues, the methods of the revenue officials, and the distribution of national currency. The discussions of this bill were prolonged during the winter, and as Mr. Phelps was well informed upon all the subjects under consideration, he took an active and influential part in all the deliberations.

On April 1, 1874, he made the speech which gave him his greatest fame as an orator and an expert on finance and currency. It was on the Banking and Currency Bill which was reported by his own committee, and to which he added an amendment providing for the immediate and gradual resumption of specie payments which had been suspended by the government since the beginning of the Civil War. It was the greenback era of irredeemable paper currency, and gold was at a high premium. Mr. Phelps presented, on behalf of his amendment, all the arguments for a currency redeemable in gold which twenty years later became so trite and familiar to the whole country, but which at that time were novel to the mass of the people. His opening remarks were these:

Mr. Speaker, we are bound to give the people of these United States a sound currency. We are bound to give them specie payments; for only gold, or a credit based on gold, is a sound currency. We are bound, whether we be liberals, republicans, or democrats, by express promise; we are bound by the provisions of a law, the first ever signed by our Chief Magistrate; we are bound by the oath we took as members of this House to support the Constitution; we are bound by the conventions of Philadelphia, Cincinnati, and Baltimore, which pledged the three great parties to "speedy resumption"; we are bound by the act of March, 1869, which "solemnly pledged the public faith to make provision at the earliest practicable period for the redemption of the United States notes in coin"; we are bound by the Constitution, which was formed "to promote the general welfare." Can we better provide for the general welfare than by giving to the people a uniform, stable currency?

For the general welfare, for the interests of other classes, others may speak. Let me to-day speak for the interests of labor—the labor of the farm and of the shop. I believe, and I think I can show, that while the moral evils resulting from a depreciated currency fall uniformly, the material ill, the real suffering and loss, fall upon the laborer and the farmer. The capitalist and merchant, in the resources of varied exchanges and varied investments, may adjust and shift the loss; the poor man receives it all. Wall Street, and Beacon Street, and Chestnut Street may escape; the farm and the workshop never. Therefore I urge to-day the resumption of specie payments in the name of the farmer and mechanic.

The New Jersey member was no longer the humorist of the House, but the practical economist and sober reasoner, versed in the art of finance. For nearly two hours, with not a written word before him, he intelligently and logically presented the learning connected with a sound currency, giving the history, the theory, and the philosophy of money, with distinctions so fine, so subtle, and so novel, and yet so just that the elementary truths, as he so grouped them, have been made the

basis of most of the arguments since made on that side of the currency question. The House found that it was learning something of value and every member listened. The time of the young economist was extended for half an hour by unanimous consent and he concluded with the following words:

I ask the Government to pay the promises that it made twelve years ago, and pay these greenbacks on demand, dollar for dollar, and ask the Government to do so by borrowing on its bonds, payable fifty years after date, money with which to pay its present indebtedness. In my opinion there is but one way to make the currency equal to money, and that is to follow that straight, narrow path, which is the path of honesty. The Government must pay its debts when they are due. Then alone can we expect to be again a prosperous and happy and honored nation.

The speech was telegraphed in full across the continent and published the next day in all the leading newspapers of the East. It was pronounced by influential journals and experts in finance the best speech purely on the subject of national currency that had ever been made in Congress. It was published and distributed broadly by individuals and societies, and was republished in England, Germany, and France. In Germany it was made the basis of a financial primer and introduced into the public schools. Benoni Price, the eminent Professor of Political Economy at Oxford University, made a pertinent criticism upon this speech, saying:

I have nowhere seen the evils of inconvertible currency traced out in detail with so much power and so much fullness as in his simple straightforward words. It is always most refreshing to me to meet with plain, direct, intelligible language in the region of jungle and confusion. This false currency has been treated by many speakers and writers, but I still had felt all along that the cruel injury to traders—most of all, the small ones—had not been traced in visible and vivid colors

before the eyes of his countrymen. This is the great service Mr. Phelps has performed for them.

In 1873 and 1874 the Republican party was losing a good deal of its prestige and standing in the country, and its leaders in Congress adopted a plan which they thought would permanently establish negro domination in the South and force negro political and social equality over the whole land. To carry out this scheme, General Benjamin F. Butler of Massachusetts introduced in the House a bill designed not only to place the control of elections in the Southern States in the hands of Federal officials, but which proposed most strenuously to protect colored people in all the civil rights which were claimed for them. The bill in question contained clauses which forbid any discrimination against negroes in enjoying all the privileges of every public school, place of amusement, hotel, restaurant, public conveyance, or benevolent institution. In fact it was intended to enforce negro equality in everything. The bill was discussed for many days, during the whole of the Forty-third Congress, and numerous amendments were offered. Mr. Phelps opposed this legislation in all its stages from first to last and voted against it on its final passage in the second session of that Congress. He held firmly to the opinion that the passing of the bill was bad for the colored race and would do them more harm than good. More than all, as a lawyer he was convinced that the Civil Rights Bill, as it was called, was a violation of the Constitution, which he and all other members of the House had sworn to support. The foremost constitutional lawyers of the House and Senate strove in vain to convince him of its constitutionality. His opposition to the bill was distasteful to the Republican leaders, and to those of his own State especially, who expected to reap from the passage of this bill and the fostering of a prejudicial public sentiment great partisan advantages. Influential Republicans of New Jersey, one or two of

whom subsequently reached the highest government stations, tried to impress upon the Congressman that it was his duty to support the bill as a party measure, creating legitimate political capital, and to allow the responsibility of determining its constitutionality to devolve upon the Supreme Court. Mr. Phelps could not be made to view the question in that light for a moment. He had a wholesome independence of adverse criticism, and although an ardent Republican, he was not the hidebound partisan to sustain through thick and thin every measure which might be demanded by party clamor or partisan expediency. At the close of the debate on this bill, these were his remarks:

> You are trying to do what it seems to me this House everlastingly tries, in one form or another, to do—to legislate against human nature. You are trying to legislate against human prejudice, and you cannot do it. No enactment will root out prejudice, no bayonet will prick it. You can only educate away prejudice; and to endeavor by a law to change the constitution of human nature is as idle as to send your cavalry to charge a mountain mist. In this view this measure is only idle and foolish. But worse than that, if enacted, while it will not be carried out, it will effect positive and pernicious ill. Let us end this cruel policy. Let us not have bayonets! "Let us have peace."
>
> But after you leave matters of opinion and come to matters of conviction, then I no longer recognize the claims of party. Then come the claims of manhood and of conscience, which are higher, and them I choose to obey when it comes to a matter of conscience and right like this. . . . In my opinion it is clear as the noonday sun that this whole legislation, both in spirit and in letter, is hostile to the Constitution; hostile to the Constitution which protects the minority; hostile to the Constitution which we swore to defend.

Three Republicans only in the House had the courage to vote with Mr. Phelps against this bill, which, as he

predicted, carried only contention to the South, where it could not be practically enforced, and brought vexation and annoyance to the North, where its mandates were evaded. When the question of its legality finally reached the Supreme Court of the United States, its civil rights clauses were decided to be unconstitutional, null, and void.

Mr. Phelps had caused to be appointed a committee to investigate the abuses prevailing under the infamous "Moiety Law," which created a horde of rascally spies, informers, and conspirators that centred at the collector's office in the New York Custom House. Under the color of law, honest importers had been fleeced out of hundreds of thousands of dollars, a large part of which lodged in the pockets of these scoundrels and their tools, and among the latter were some lawyers of more acuteness than conscience. The shameful practices permitted by this law were so strongly exposed that when a movement was made in Congress for its repeal it met with little opposition.

When the final adjournment of the House came in the latter part of June, the Representative from the Fifth District of New Jersey had performed his full share of the work of that busy session. His influence had been felt in the disposal of the most important measures. He had been industrious in the committee room, in the introduction and passage of numerous bills, and in all the routine labors of the House. His official life had greatly increased his correspondence, which always had been large. He was always prompt in answering letters of every kind, so that he required at Washington the services of a stenographer and several clerks. Yet he found time hospitably to entertain his many friends, acquaintances, and visitors, including politicians from his own State and district. He had been given by the Speaker proper opportunities on the floor and had spoken upon most of the pending bills of consequence. His per-

ceptions were so quick and his memory so retentive that he soon became proficient in a knowledge of the perplexing rules of the body of which he was a member, that few are enabled to master except through the experience of several sessions, and when the separation came he was well up to that small body who are recognized in each Congress as "leaders of the House." It was before the close of this session that President Grant wanted to make Mr. Phelps First Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, but the latter felt that he could not accept the offer.

In the latter part of July, 1874, there was a great celebration in Paterson, arranged by veteran soldiers. It was begun with an immense military and civic parade, in which were President Grant and a body of national government dignitaries and State officials of New Jersey. The exercises were in a large wigwam and Mr. Phelps was the orator of the occasion. He made a very thoughtful address upon the blessings of peace, picturing the evils and horrors of war, and urging arbitration for the settlement of national difficulties in every case possible. His remarks were listened to with attention and greeted with frequent applause, but the glamor of the war was still over the land, and the soldiers of the victorious North were everywhere receiving political preferment and distinguished honors. Consequently, arguments for peace were not so impressive as they are to-day, when Mr. Phelps's thoughts of thirty years ago are those prevailing among the great and most civilized nations of the globe.

Congress not having ended until it was well in the summer, Mr. Phelps did not have much rest in private that year, for in the fall a new Congress was to be elected and the campaign began early.

The times were inauspicious for the Republican party. There had been a general monetary panic in 1873; the business of the country continued to be prostrated, its manufacturing industries paralyzed, and the working classes of the nation lacked remunerative employment

and were dissatisfied and soured. Under such conditions it is always the party in power at Washington that is held responsible by the not very deeply reasoning masses of voters. Besides all this, the many scandals of the Grant administration—the Credit Mobilier exposure and the back-pay grab, the revelation of defalcations and corruptions among important public officials, persistent rumors and charges that still greater criminality had been concealed, and the general laxity of official morals growing out of a long war, had created a deep distrust of the Republican party even in its strongholds. This was the load with which Republican candidates were weighted that year. The State elections in the fall, prior to November, were almost without exception disastrous to the Republicans and ominous of the general defeat of the party a few weeks later.

Mr. Phelps was renominated by his party without opposition, and this result was hailed with commendation by the Republican and independent press the country over, and with complimentary notices from fair-minded Democratic journals. But some adverse influences were at work. From personal jealousy of his rapid rise into prominence and his display of partisan independence, a few of the Republican leaders of New Jersey were indifferent to his success, if not actually hostile, and partly for the same reason the administration was lukewarm, when it might, within proper bounds, have lent its influence and encouragement.

The Democratic candidate was Augustus W. Cutler, a well-known lawyer of Morris County. He was a man of moderate ability, whose amiability and fair reputation personally had enabled him to be elected from a county usually Republican, to the State Senate, where he made a clean record. Mr. Cutler accepted the nomination with reluctance, and as he said himself, without any expectation of being elected. It was the prevailing belief with Republicans and Democrats that Mr. Phelps had made

such a favorable impression by his first service in Congress, and that the district was so proud of him, that his defeat was hardly possible.

Mr. Phelps was never what might be called a good politician. He had a remarkable distaste for the minutiæ of practical politics and avoided them wholly whenever possible. This was the only qualification for public life in which he was deficient. Nor at this time did he want the close confidence of the political advisers and managers who subsequently aided so much in making every one of his campaigns a success. Although this year he made the customary tours through his district and addressed the mass meetings, which were not many, he did not enter into the canvass with his usual vim, but permitted himself to be misled by indiscreet admirers into over-confidence of the result, and awakened from his delusion too late to recover lost ground.

While he was subjected to unrestrained partisan abuse throughout his canvass, not one act or vote of his in Congress was assailed, except his vote on the Civil Rights Bill. This vote had been uniformly approved by the Democrats, who used it now, with partial success, to prejudice the colored vote against the Republican candidate. The fact stood out plainly that in Congress Mr. Phelps had sustained every measure of economy and reform, and he defied his enemies to point out a single instance where he was unfaithful to the interests of the people he represented.

Election day came and a tempest of discontent swept over the entire country, carrying nearly all the well-anchored Republican States from their moorings. Massachusetts elected its only Democratic governor for nearly half a century. In New Jersey, the Democratic plurality for governor was phenomenal, and the Republicans elected but nineteen of the sixty members of the Assembly. The Republican candidate in the Fifth District of the State went down in the crash, as did scores of his Republican

Congressional associates, and for the first time since the beginning of the Civil War the Democrats secured a majority in the national House of Representatives.

The Democratic majority for governor in Mr. Phelps's district was 1061. The vote for Congressional candidates was: Cutler, 11,677, Phelps, 11,670. Mr. Phelps therefore was beaten by seven votes only in a district which gave a Democratic majority of over one thousand. Although suffering the misfortune of his party, Mr. Phelps felt very proud of the discriminating vote in his favor, as he had cause to be, and there was never a denial after the result of this election of his strength and popularity as a candidate for popular suffrage, and at all elections he led at the polls every candidate running upon the same ticket.

There were irregularities and violations of the law charged against the Democrats at the election which the supporters of the defeated candidate for Congress thought would justify him in contesting the seat of his opponent, believing that with so small a plurality against him there would be a good chance of success.

The geniality and good-fellowship which Mr. Phelps displayed while associating with his political adversaries put him on the most friendly footing with the Democrats of the House. No sooner had the result in the New Jersey Fifth District become known than Mr. Phelps received letters from leading Democratic members of the old Congress, who would have control of affairs in the next House, telling him that if he should determine to make a contest, they would see that he had the utmost fair play and a most liberal consideration of his case. But Mr. Phelps, without hesitation, turned a deaf ear to all these alluring suggestions. What made him one of the most agreeable of men was his disposition always to make the best of everything. He did not now sulk in his tent, nor whine over his bad fortune, but with the magnanimity that he never lacked, as soon as the result

of the election was definitely settled through the official returns, he penned the following letter to his rival:

TEANECK, NEAR ENGLEWOOD,
Nov. 24th, 1874.

HON. AUGUSTUS W. CUTLER:

Dear Sir: To-day's canvass breaks my silence, and I can tender you my hearty congratulations. Pardon a delay, which was necessary, but which seemed ungracious.

The close vote and the strange irregularities of ballot and count forced me, in justice to others, to wait for the assurance of your election.

As a candidate, I was representing those who voted for me, and in their name I asked the fullest evidence, that their wishes had been legally denied.

Otherwise the first news of your success should have come from your opponent. I can now justly acknowledge my defeat and your election.

I shall not contest your seat—all rumors to the contrary notwithstanding. I have no grounds, for I have in my own case received that fair play and full justice which I have often boasted was the assured possession of all Jersey men.

The cause of my defeat was very simple—a lack of votes. "Only this and nothing more." A majority of the citizens who went to the polls preferred another. And I should be the last one to question or impede their choice.

It is a pleasure for me to thank you for the uniform courtesy of the canvass, and to ask you, if you cannot say to our many common friends, that neither publicly nor privately did your Republican competitor find any fault in you, except your Democracy.

I prized the honor of representing this constituency and I regret the loss of it; but I am not without consolation in the thought that my loss has been your and the public gain.

You and them, do I congratulate; you, that you have secured this large opportunity of serving the people; and them, that the voice of their district shall be as before—only more eloquently and more efficiently—against those enemies of the Republic who would perpetuate an irredeemable cur-

rency, increase the central power, and plunder the national treasury.

I am with respect and good wishes for your success, one of your constituents.

Wm. Walter Phelps.

Mr. Cutler's response was gentlemanly and very cordial, and he said in part:

It is a matter of pleasure to me that you recognize the personal honor and courtesy of the canvass, and I can truly say, that in looking back, I cannot recall an expression or remark that grated harshly on my ear or left an unpleasantness in memory.

I need not say that success was the farthest from my dreams, nor did I anticipate that any tidal wave could reach you, but now that I am elected, I am painfully conscious of the fact, that I immediately succeed one who has secured in a single Congressional term a national reputation, made his District celebrated, compelled all parties to do homage to his talent, admire his eloquence, and acknowledge his power.

I doubt if any Congressman-elect can boast of a constituent more chivalric and high-minded than yourself, and I know that none can feel more honored than I do when I remember that among my constituents I can number you.

This manly and rather unique correspondence attracted much attention and brought out words of approval from the most reputable journals of New Jersey and other States.

CHAPTER VII

His Second Session — Investigates Louisiana Affairs and Exposes the Carpet-Baggers—Fêted by New Orleans—Leaves Congress—His Love for Newspapers and Newspaper Men—Goes to Rescue of the New York *Tribune*—Life at Teaneck—Travels for Health

THE second session of the Forty-third Congress convened in December, 1874, and Mr. Phelps was on hand with numerous bills to present, some of them emanating from his own committee on Banking and Currency. It was then the heydey of greenbackism and irredeemable paper money. Mr. Kelley of Pennsylvania introduced a bill to further inflate the national currency by the issue of many millions in paper money, which should be a legal tender for all government bonds and all government and individual liabilities. This bill Mr. Phelps attacked in a speech in which he denounced the whole irredeemable paper currency policy as pernicious, unjust, and dishonest. He said in concluding:

My friend from Pennsylvania, whose measure is now before the House, comes and looks at this problem and offers a different solution. He ignores the public creditor, and glories in national protests. He would let the debt stand forever, and recognize insolvency as the permanent condition of a free people. This attempt we are making to-day is an attempt which has strewed these six thousand years with failures, and which will fail to the end—an attempt to make money. There is no way to get money except to earn it or steal it. You cannot make it. I wish only to reiterate that in my opinion there is but one way to make this currency equal to money, to bring

it to a par with gold. That is to follow that straight and narrow path which is the path of honesty. The private citizen has to follow it; the Government, too, must follow it. The citizen pays his debts. We must pay our debts. Then only can we expect to be prosperous and happy; then only shall we again be a happy, a prosperous, and an honored nation.

Mr. Kelley's bill did not pass.

The House ordered the appointment of a special committee to investigate the chaotic condition of affairs in Louisiana, where there were two rival State governments, each claiming to be legally chosen at the election in the fall of 1874. The Democratic legislature had been arbitrarily interfered with by General Sheridan under what he interpreted to be his instructions from Washington. The White League, a very large organization of New Orleans citizens, had come to the desperate determination to dare anything, legal or illegal, rather than to submit longer to the recklessness and pillage of the carpet-baggers, who were using for their own profit the State and government, which was sustained only by Federal power. The Speaker appointed on the committee George F. Hoar of Massachusetts, William A. Wheeler of New York, William P. Frye of Maine, Charles Foster of Ohio, William Walter Phelps of New Jersey, James C. Robinson of Illinois, Clarkson N. Potter of New York.

This was the era of Reconstruction, when the ashes of the great volcanic eruption in the South were still hot to the tread. It required, therefore, on the part of any Northern Congressman unflinching courage, a cool and unbiassed judgment, and the most unbending, non-partisan determination to deal justly with any question relating to the South. Mr. Phelps was selected as one of the sub-committee to go to New Orleans and take testimony. The work was done in the custom house of that city, the committee toiling day and night for several weeks. Each side had agreed to accept the committee

as final arbitrators, and to cause the resignation of any or all members claiming seats in the respective legislatures as the committee might determine, so that there should be but one legislature and one State government, the legality of which should not be questioned. The testimony offered was very conflicting; all of it biassed and much of it perjured. Mr. Phelps was convinced that the Federal government had gone further than was justifiable in many instances and that there were legislative seats illegally claimed by both parties. He drafted the report of the sub-committee, which was submitted to the whole committee and practically adopted by that body. Out of this action grew a plan of adjustment which was accepted by the opposing parties in the controversy. It seated and unseated contesting members of the legislature, but affirmed the legality of the Kellogg State government, which had been in power for more than a year. Political quiet followed in Louisiana until troubles growing out of the disputed election of Mr. Hayes broke out in the fall of 1876.

The investigation made by this committee exposed many of the abuses of the carpet-bagger rule and was the first heavy blow struck at that iniquity. The South undoubtedly owed a great deal to Mr. Phelps and appreciated it. The city of New Orleans gave him an imposing public dinner. His course was not pleasing to some of the radical Republicans of the North, nor was the award of the committee very favorably received by the national administration, but time fully justified the wisdom of its arbitration.

When the Louisiana investigation was concluded, there was an end to Mr. Phelps's work in the Forty-third Congress, which expired March 3, 1875. No man in that or any succeeding Congress ever elicited from the press of the country more attention and comment. He was, as a rule, on the best footing with the entire journalistic fraternity. He valued newspapers very highly and gave

all the time he could spare to their reading. He said they kept him in constant touch with all the throbbing world—with its incidents, pleasures, pains, and whole history. All this he liked, for he was remarkably fond of travelling on the open highway of the world. With few exceptions, throughout his whole life, the decent newspapers of his own and of other countries treated him fairly and courteously. Correspondence with the editors of newspapers was with Mr. Phelps a lifelong habit, and this intercourse was not wholly confined to the press of his own political party. Watterson, McLean, Pulitzer, Dana, John Bigelow, Godkin, Horace White, and other editors of leading Democratic newspapers were his warm personal friends.

He was a most liberal subscriber to newspapers—political, religious, and independent—of all parties and sects, including the leading journals of New Jersey and nearly all those of his own county and Congressional district. His benefactions and gratuities to newspaper publishers and to journalists were extremely liberal, and were ceaseless from the very beginning of his participation in politics. He seldom refused when appealed to by a newspaper man for aid.

Shortly after the death of Horace Greeley, a syndicate of capitalists and politicians, representing certain interests in the Republican party, planned to obtain a controlling quantity of the stock of the New York *Tribune* establishment, which they thought was at that time within their reach. It was reported that a large sum of money would be required almost immediately to keep the paper under the control existing at that juncture and that Mr. Phelps was largely instrumental in the advancement of the funds which saved the *Tribune* from being transferred to strange hands.

He had now acquired, both in and out of Congress, a fame for the highest class of oratory, the lustre of which never became dim. He had not the "Front of Jove"—

none of the physical presence or massiveness that makes oratory so impressive with many speakers. Nature sealed a great heart and graceful mind in a body not large in stature. But yet he owed much to his personality, for there was that about him that inspired all whom he met with a sense of his capacity and more than ordinary acquaintance with human affairs. He possessed in an eminent degree the touchstone that drew attention to him in every assemblage.

He wrote some of his speeches, but never studied them afterward. When a speech was written, the manuscript was immediately thrown aside and never looked at again. When speaking extemporaneously, his thoughts came to him clearly and well-formed and he seemed never puzzled with half-formed ideas. He adored the fresh and original, and seldom in his speeches, writings, or conversation did he indulge in stock quotations. His language was strikingly plain, and no one ever heard him utter a sentence that was not clean-cut, or that was capable of more than one meaning. With such a command of diction as he possessed, there is a temptation to resort to glittering rhetoric as a substitute for knowledge, but to this he never yielded. One of the highest compliments he thought was ever paid to his mental and verbal clearness was that of a Holland working man of the First Ward of Paterson, who understood English with difficulty. This man, after listening to a political speech by Mr. Phelps, said: "Why, he talks in such a way that we poor Hollanders can understand every word he says." Yet no man was less of a platitudinarian, and on the rostrum, as in ordinary conversation, he was so bright, direct, and sincere that few listeners failed to be fascinated by the magic of his voice, the gracefulness of his language, and the cleverness of his thoughts.

While serving his first term in Congress, Mr. Phelps had the usual experience of national legislators in the disposal of Federal offices. This was one of the most

disagreeable of all his public duties. It created for him the most virulent enemies that he afterwards found in the Republican ranks in his district. He listened in patience to all applicants who in personal interviews sought his aid, and replied to all letters asking his assistance in office-getting with courtesy and with sympathy for disappointment when the writer's request could not be granted. Doubtless he had to encounter no more than the usual difficulties of those who have public offices within their control, in placating disappointed office-seekers, nevertheless his experience in this official business was very disagreeable.

When he took his departure from Washington, there was a general wish and expectation that his absence from the national legislature would be but temporary

Mr. Phelps went to his home, not to indulge right away in rest and recreation, but to meet the cares of his business office in New York, for, as was the case of most men of affairs then, his private estate had become impaired by the general depreciation in values caused by the recent panic. His offices were on the corner of Broadway and Wall Street and were intended solely for convenience in the management of his own estate and private affairs. On arriving there in the morning, it was his practice to proceed at once to the transaction of such business as required his personal attention, and he would dispose of it in the rapid and careful manner characteristic of him in everything. There was a chief of staff and a head for each department—corporations, law, real-estate investments in and out of New York, and politics. This is the manner in which the affairs of his estate are conducted to-day, politics omitted. All of his assistants had experience in their several departments and they never consulted Mr. Phelps except in cases of more than ordinary difficulty and importance. It was his custom when he once trusted a person in his employ to trust him absolutely. He would say that it was most distasteful

to him, and in fact, abject slavery, to be constantly on the watch of those serving him. He would rather endure faithless service than keep up such an intolerable vigilance. He never had cause to regret the confidence placed in the executive heads of his business affairs. Like his father, he had a strong partiality for successful men. He was ready to give money lavishly to those who were unfortunate, but he could not often be induced to place a business trust in the hands of any one who had not shown an ability to succeed in the world.

Naturally, he would have many business engagements to meet. He was prompt in fulfilling them and expected all who had appointments with him to appear at the fixed time. It can be said also that in all social engagements he observed the same punctuality. He required exactness in all the work of his office, and was extremely critical in all that related to neatness and accuracy, especially in correspondence.

It was his habit daily to attend to business without intermission until one o'clock, when he would go to luncheon at the Downtown Club, then the most pretentious place of entertainment in his vicinity. There were very few of his New Jersey friends who did not at some time enjoy the hospitality of this favorite retreat with him. Senators, Congressmen, distinguished journalists, and literary men, far and near, when in the city readily embraced an opportunity to meet Mr. Phelps at luncheon. While he could bear patiently with dull persons, he courted bright people, and he had a constant longing for brightness, sunshine, and warmth. It is not strange, therefore, that more than once there were seated at Mr. Phelps's club table, Blaine, Evarts, Thomas B. Reed, McKinley, Halstead, Watterson, and other shining intellects of their class.

From the club, Mr. Phelps would usually return to his office to sign the letters dictated in the morning, and then go up-town to meet friends, and, more often than other-

wise, conduct some of them to share the hospitality of Teaneck, where the social life was so attractive and delightful to all visitors. He seldom went home without being accompanied by one or more guests.

After his return from Congress, in the spring of 1875, Mr. Phelps spent many hours in planning improvements to his homestead and looking out for further landed investments. He was also taking much interest in the education of his sons, who were at school at Newburgh, New York. He kept up a continuous correspondence with them, and noted attentively the reports of their progress. He went with his family to Bushy Hill in the latter part of the summer, and later had a long drive through the Berkshires.

In February, 1876, he started on a brief trip to California, by the way of Aspinwall, stopping at Acapulco and other Mexican ports, and reached San Francisco in March. He returned East overland, visiting and noting the progress of many of the Western cities.

While Mr. Phelps was in Washington during his Congressional service, an epidemic of typhoid fever broke out in the hotel where he was stopping, which was caused by what was afterward ascertained to be defective drainage in the cellar of the building. Many of the guests, including Congressmen and other prominent personages, were prostrated, and several deaths resulted. Mr. Phelps was one of the victims of the malady. The disease kept him in a low physical condition for weeks. Then followed a slow, fluctuating convalescence. But his physical health and strength was never again permanently recovered. He was always after this a constant physical sufferer, rarely knowing an hour free from pain. For the repair of his health, he and Mrs. Phelps went in the spring of 1876 to spend some months in Europe. In the large body of friends who went to the vessel to bid them farewell were a goodly number of representative Republicans, who had been Mr. Phelps's political intimates, and who

came to emphasize the strong desire and lively expectation of their party that on his return he would again participate in public affairs.

He had entrance in Europe to the highest circles everywhere, and on this tour he gave much time to investigation of institutions of learning and art in England, France, and Germany, and to the society of scholars, authors, and scientists. He visited Oxford University in England and like institutions of other nations. The comments recorded in his diary on the colleges, literature, drama, and paintings in the art galleries in the cities he visited are proof of what a close and clever observer he was. His animadversions on European statesmen then in power were exceedingly original and interesting.

Looking at mementos of Voltaire at Potsdam led him to an analysis of that philosopher's character, as well as those of the skeptics Hume and Rousseau. One Sunday in Paris he attended the American Chapel, where he heard a sermon, the sentiment of which he heartily approved. The discourse was on "The Thorn in the Flesh," and deprecated the folly of being over-curious over Scriptural puzzles. The comments made by Mr. Phelps are evidences that he had a sound faith in the religion of Christ. He wrote:

> A personal Christ may be discredited, but his teachings are conquering the world. Equally logical are the processes of science and religion. There are different premises, however. The premises of the Christian are certainly as well founded in reason as those of science.

He had a naturally reverent mind and never referred to the Deity lightly. On occasions when he would summarize and pass judgment upon the eminent qualities of the greatest men he had known, he would in conclusion quote the words of a renowned French theologian, who began the funeral sermon of Louis XIV. by saying, "God alone is great."

While on his European travels, Mr. Phelps seemed to find time to read many books, and in his diary criticised them in a manner rare for its novelty and originality. In his intercourse with distinguished people in England, he gathered much of the history of the titled personages, statesmen, and historic characters of recent times and past eras that has never been published.

Mr. Phelps returned to his own land the latter part of October and went to the Centennial Exposition at Philadelphia, and then going home, he voted, as he records on November 7th, "the whole Republican ticket."

Before he left Europe, a Republican convention had been held in his Congressional district, and the prevailing sentiment of that body was that he should be the candidate. The Democratic tidal wave of 1874 had sensibly subsided, and it was contended that Mr. Phelps could surely recover the district for the Republicans. He had, however, sent most positive word to the party leaders that his name must not go before the convention.

CHAPTER VIII

Great Love for Trees—Plants Six Hundred Thousand Trees on His Teaneck Estate — Studies Arboriculture in Many Lands — Supports Blaine in 1880—Re-elected to Congress—Hackensack Savings Bank Fails—Generosity of Phelps

IF William Walter Phelps really indulged in a "hobby," it was his unceasing love for trees and woods. Arboriculture was with him at all times an absorbing interest, so strong that it may be called a passion. As soon as he made his first purchase of land at Teaneck he began the planting of trees, and this before he commenced the reconstruction of the old farmhouse, and from 1870 to 1893, the planting and growing of trees was one of the leading activities on his estate. At first he had only his coachman to help him, and before he went to New York of a morning and after his return at night, they would spend a few hours putting trees in the ground. This was the small beginning of that extensive arboriculture on his homestead, where in after-years there were growing hundreds of thousands of trees of many species. He enjoyed this work, but the initial process soon became too slow for him, and therefore experienced assistants were engaged and larger and more systematic methods were adopted.

The ornamentation of so large an estate, formed by many additions to the original tract at various periods, was one of the problems that required intelligence in conception and execution, as the scheme had to be developed by an accretive process in keeping with the

extension of the domain. Adaptability to soil and climate was an important factor to be considered, as many exotics were to be introduced, and experiments were tried, some of which turned out to be costly failures. But these mishaps never for a moment discouraged the proprietor in his struggles to reach his ideals.

From 1875 to 1880, the arborical progress was very great, and Mr. Phelps then began happily to realize some of the success of his early efforts, and when the year 1893 came, there had been planted on his domain fully six hundred thousand trees, from single growths and small clumps and groups to masses forming a number of acres of woodland. In addition to this, natural wood-belts were cleared of underbrush and undesirable timber, other trees being substituted to produce the wished-for effect. In some of the more secluded nooks of woodland, rabbit, quail, and partridge lived free from fear of the hunter's gun; here in the early springtime blue violets and trailing arbutus peep through moss or leaf-strewn soil before the grass begins to garb sunny dells in emerald tints.

In tree planting, the stately Norway spruce preponderated, the number being 70,000. Of arbor-vitæ, 60,000 were used; of American elms, 65,000; white pine, 50,000; Scotch pine, 25,000; Austrian pine, 35,000; lindens, 25,000. Larch, English elm, imported hemlock, white and scarlet maple, Norway maple, ash-leaved maple, beech, red cedar, gum, tulip, golden willow, catalpa, oak, copper beech, and several other varieties were planted in quantities of from 2000 to 10,000. He liked all kinds of arbor and forest trees, but there was something in the American elm that was more than ordinarily pleasing to him. There were two thousand oaks grown from acorns planted in boxes, the success of the experiment amply verifying the poet's declaration that "Tall oaks from little acorns grow." An experiment of raising chestnut trees from the nut was almost equally successful, 60,000 of the plants having been set out in groves. At first

threatened with complete destruction, the tops were mowed off with a scythe, after which a thrifty growth set in, and there is now promise of extensive groves of the trees bordering some of the more remote drives.

Mr. Phelps personally planned an elaborate scheme of decorative and protective planting that promised the most effective result artistically and gave the greatest benefit of shade to the driveways and bridle-paths. This was especially illustrated on Bennett's Road, a private way nearly three miles long, extending from the armory in Englewood to the present mansion. Starting at the entrance gate at Railroad Avenue in Englewood city was a planting of silver and white maple, then, in order, scarlet maple, flowering catalpa, white pine, hemlock, and white pine again. Succeeding this came a stretch of natural growth known as the "hickory woods," composed of hickory, elm, beech, chestnut, oak, black birch, with here and there an imported tree set in for companionship with the towering natives, whose wide-spreading arms and rugged bolls proclaim them the offspring of ancient times.

What is referred to as the poplar experiment was made on Sheffield Street, which runs from Teaneck to Nordhof, a mile and three fourths. This grand avenue was bordered by alternating rows of Lombardy poplar, laurel-leaved willow, and white oaks, producing an effect not equalled in any other portion of the grounds. Standing at the top of the rise and looking down through the vista until the eye lost the symmetrical formation in the vanishing point of the perspective, the diversity of form and color was an alluring attraction to the senses. The picture evidenced the true artistic conception of the master mind and the fidelity with which its ideas and instructions were carried out. But this delightful product of mind and matter was of only fleeting duration. The deadly oyster scale and sap gall soon manifested their power, and the tall poplars succumbed to the irresistible enemy.

This left the beautiful avenue with ragged edges that were temporarily remedied by successive plantings, each in turn perishing. Here and there on high ground, where spots of soil seem to have extended a more friendly greeting to the immigrants from Lombardy, an occasional poplar may yet be seen, but the glory of the tree as a correlative element in a broad landscape scheme departed.

The Diagonal Road, from Teaneck Road and Cedar Lane to Englewood, a mile and a half, is heavily bordered with a great variety of trees in alternate rows, clumps, and belts. The grounds west of Teaneck Road and north of Cedar Lane, being more strictly the demesne attached to the original home, present some exquisite effects and surprises in road borders, massing, and minor grouping, the rolling nature of the land presenting inviting possibilities in dips and rises. Riding or walking, there is a succession of entrancing views, near and far, caught as they appear through breaks in trees, where velvety lanes stretch away to glades and dells or ascend to grassy knolls.

Negundo, ash, maple, elm, Norway spruce, willow, and several other varieties of trees define and carefully maintain bridle-paths that occasionally run parallel with the driveways and then diverge and carry the rider on from delight to ever-recurring charm.

Near the mansion and at more remote points many varieties of green and blooming shrubbery added to the beauty of the picture. Lilacs, golden-bells, flowering japonicas, rose of Sharon, snowballs, syringas, spireas, and other shrubs contributed their beauty to the scene and their fragrance to the pure air.

The vines that now cover the ruins are an indication of the creepers that gave the house a coat of varying green tints from early spring until late fall, and largely maintained the bright colors through the severest winter.

At one time, somewhat elaborate designs in bedding plants were carried out on the immediate home grounds.

These were abandoned after the burning of the mansion, although the greenhouses, with their thirty thousand square feet of floor space, produced ample material for any venture in this line of ornamentation.

Wherever Mr. Phelps went during the journeying of his entire life, the trees of every clime were an attraction and a pleasure to him. In California, Europe, Asia, and Africa, he was an interested observer of forests and all fine parks. When absent from home, he kept in mind all the localities on his estate, in each of which different kinds of trees were growing, and was habitually writing to his Teaneck manager inquiring after the growth of each variety of trees, giving careful directions for their care and for additional plantings after sending on new species from other countries. On his travels he would make a study of the soils on which each species of trees would flourish.

In the small but numerous parks in Washington he was, during his whole Congressional service, a most familiar figure, so frequently would he seek some one of these resorts in which to read his morning newspapers; and at Teaneck, its woodlands were his favorite places for walking and thought. They appealed to the intense idealism and poetry of his nature, while their umbrage and quietness soothed him. No odor of the city polluted their atmosphere, and no noise of factory was vibrant under their shade.

He had his favorite trees, which he respected, admired, and cherished as he would human beings; they seemed to have for him an intelligent presence, and in his adoration he almost believed they could think.

Now, in these after-years, it often seems in the autumn that there can be heard on the crisp fallen leaves of these wooded paths the invisible tread of the one who so often walked there in his living manhood.

It was in 1878 that Mr. Phelps and several associates organized a company which they named the "Palisades

Land Company." The purpose of this organization was to develop a tract of land of two thousand acres or more, purchased of various owners prior to the panic of 1873. Since the organization of the Palisades Land Company, some of this tract has become the property of others, but the company, of which the Phelps estate is by far the largest stockholder, still possesses a great many valuable acres bordering on the river shore of the Hudson and extending along the top of the Palisades from near Englewood to beyond Alpine. The beautiful views these lands afford from the top of the Palisades cannot fail to make them the finest sites for elegant country homes to be found anywhere near the great metropolis of the nation.

The anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns was celebrated in New York in January, 1880. It was a rare assemblage of brilliant intellects. Mr. Phelps was an invited guest, and in the speaking he followed Henry Ward Beecher. The theme given him was "Highland Hospitality." After paying an appropriate tribute to the proverbial hospitality of Scotchmen, he remarked:

> Already we feel that the lack of the age is not the hospitality that warms the body, but a hospitality that shall warm the heart. A stimulated sympathy makes us build hospitals, libraries, and galleries, and Bible and tract societies—enough to make the outer life of the citizen comfortable and comely, and then? How easy to share our homes! How hard, our hearts! How easy to give money; how hard to give sympathy and love! Yet these qualities only are divine and the most vital to the happiness of man. But these qualities are the very ones that civilization—modern life—with all its infinite resources, is powerless to give. . . . Shall our schools and colleges, our railways and telegraphs, our galleries and museums, our colossal fortunes, putting into single hands the resources of empire, make a nation whose manners and morals shall be good, because their intellectual perception of the right and proper shall be perfect; whose institutions of education and charity shall be complete and satisfactory, who shall dis-

charge all duties perfectly, but mechanically and without heart? Then life will indeed be perfect and not worth living; and human hearts, when not changed to brains, starving in the midst of apparent plenty, longing for sympathy and love, dying in the midst of life, shall cry in despair: "Who shall deliver us from the bondage of this death?" Yet this is the tendency of modern culture.

The speaker then made an earnest plea that in religion should be confirmed the old gospel of love, and that "under its teachings the heart and the soul shall keep pace with the intellectual and material progress of the age; and that hospitality in its widest scope shall offer not only a home, but a heart." These were rather unusual opinions to be set forth in an after-dinner speech, but the earnest and heartfelt expressions of the orator were loudly applauded.

In the last of January, 1880, Mr. Phelps went to Europe and spent the remainder of the winter in Southern France and Italy. Letters from public men and political leaders from all over the country followed him. They discussed the political conditions then existing, foreshadowing the policy of the Republican party in the approaching presidential election of that year, and urging the absent Jerseyman to again enter into the arena of politics. His relations with Mr. Blaine continued to be of the most intimate and confidential nature, and he was always in correspondence with the Maine statesman. Mr. Blaine was in a dilemma. His friends were determined to put him in the field in opposition to the third-term movement for General Grant, which was led by Roscoe Conkling, who had a great dislike for Mr. Blaine. The latter did not wish to make the fight, as the antagonism which it would arouse would be distasteful to him, and further, would imperil success. Nevertheless, he held, with John Sherman and the most cool-headed Republican leaders, that to attempt to elect any man to

the Presidency for a third term would be disastrous to the Republican party. This belief no doubt had an influence in his finally yielding to the persuasions of his supporters to allow his name to go before the national convention.

Mr. Phelps returned from Europe in April to do battle for his friend. He presided over the Republican convention of Bergen County, which elected delegates to the State convention to be held at Trenton, and he made a warm and enlivening address, citing the reasons why the party deserved and might expect success at the elections that year. He went as a delegate to the Republican State convention in May, called to elect delegates to the national convention. The Grant third-term project had no small following in New Jersey. Senator Frederic T. Frelinghuysen and other Republicans of influence favored it. Mr. Phelps labored to have a solid Blaine delegation chosen from his own State, and he displayed much political talent of the highest degree in accomplishing his end. During the all-night session of the Committee on Platform, he introduced this resolution:

Resolved, That reasonable dread of executive power, and the experience of other republics which have fallen through the ambitions of their chief rulers, justify the American people in amending the constitution to provide for one Presidential term of ten years and the ineligibility of any President to succeed himself.

This was the signal for a high-pressure debate, in which the author of the resolution gallantly defended it against the assaults of the third-term men. It was denounced as a direct insult to the ex-President. Its champion showed that over and over again the Republican party had committed itself to a limit of eight years and claimed that the present candidate for a third term had himself indorsed the principle of this resolution. After an hour's discussion, it was laid on the table by a vote of nineteen to sixteen, eleven members of the committee being absent.

Although the resolution was not adopted, its introduction and the debate upon it killed the third-term movement in the convention and in New Jersey, which was the end Mr. Phelps sought. When the convention assembled the next morning, the entire delegation selected from the State was for Mr. Blaine, and Mr. Phelps was a delegate-at-large.

At the national convention, General Grant and Mr. Blaine were the leading candidates in the ballotings, while Senator John Sherman had the solid support of the influential State of Ohio and some votes from other States. There were before the convention the names of several "favorite sons" with delegates from their own localities. It required three hundred and ninety-nine votes to make a nomination. The highest vote for Grant was three hundred and six, and that for Blaine two hundred and eighty-five. After prolonged ballotings, Ohio abandoned Sherman for Garfield, who then received the Blaine vote and was nominated, a result that was satisfactory to Mr. Blaine's supporters, who found that their favorite could not be named.

In 1878, Charles H. Voorhis of Bergen County, a Republican, was elected to Congress from the Fifth New Jersey District. He became unavailable as a candidate for re-nomination, as he had become involved in disastrous bank failures in Hackensack. As the time for selecting a candidate to succeed Mr. Voorhis in 1880 approached, Mr. Phelps was implored by his warm admirers and by representative party men in his district to enter the field as a candidate. This he declined to do, pleading that his feeble health would not allow him vigorously to carry the Congressional banner in the district that year. Under pressure, however, he yielded to an agreement that he must not be announced as a candidate and positively no attempt should be made at the primary elections to choose delegates pledged to him, but if the convention should, under these conditions, decide to make him

its candidate, he would do his best in the canvass. At the convention the Bergen County delegation claimed that under the party usage their county was entitled to name the candidate for Congress for two terms in succession, and they would name Mr. Phelps, who should in justice be given the nomination without opposition. But John Hill of Morris County was very desirous of occupying a seat in Congress again, and his adherents had made strong efforts for him at the primary elections. Although Mr. Phelps had positively forbidden that any struggle should be made to place him in nomination, he had in the convention but six votes less than Mr. Hill, who was named. The result created much public disappointment, and the Bergen County Republicans felt that much injustice had been done their county, and while the delegates were separating at the adjournment of the convention, many of them made the declaration that two years later on they would, either with or without Mr. Phelps's consent, put him forward as an aggressive candidate for the Congressional nomination. It will be seen that they kept their word.

An active part was taken by Mr. Phelps in the management of the presidential campaign of 1880 up to the first of October, when he was overtaken by an utter physical collapse which seriously alarmed his family and his physicians. The most skilful medical advisers insisted that he should at once give up everything—free himself from all care of business and politics—and go abroad. He felt that he would have to yield, but he did not depart until he had made two telling speeches at mass meetings, one of which was in Paterson, where he was heard by a vast assemblage. But so feeble was his health that when the vessel that was to bear him away left its dock at Hoboken, many of his friends awaiting his departure expressed well-grounded fears that they were bidding him a final farewell. He landed at Bremen, but before proceeding to Italy and the south of France, where he intended to spend the

coldest months of the winter, he made a tour through Southern Germany and Austria. At the beginning of January, 1881, just as the train which was to convey him to Italy was starting out of the station, a clerk from the hotel where he had been stopping came running up and tossed into his car letters and papers which had just arrived from the United States. He examined his mail leisurely as the train went on, and finally coming to his newspapers, the first one he opened gave an account of the wrecking of the savings bank at Hackensack. His first thought was that the closing of the doors of the bank at the beginning of the winter would put to loss and serious inconvenience, and probably actual suffering, many of the depositors of lesser amounts—workers in the brick-yards and others who had accumulated small savings. Just as soon as he reached a stopping-place of the train from which a message could be wired, he sent to his New York office this telegram:

Pay immediately all deposits in savings bank, of one hundred dollars and under, principal and interest, and charge the same to me.

Sheriff David A. Pell of Bergen County, Mr. Phelps's old and tried friend, was entrusted with the payment of these moneys. He was furnished with funds within a few hours after the cable dispatch was received and was ready to make full payments upon the books without any delay. The sum that was thus disbursed was about eighteen thousand dollars. Mr. Phelps was afterwards partially reimbursed by the dividends made by the receiver of the bank. Fair-minded men and newspapers credited this advance of funds by Mr. Phelps justly as an act of disinterested generosity and it elicited great praise from the common people. The New York *Evening Post* said:

The purpose we believe to be entirely disinterested. Mr. Phelps has done a good many good things in his lifetime, but

this is certainly one of the very best. If sincere gratitude possesses any curative quality, Mr. Phelps may be expected back in New York very soon in perfect health.

Like praise came from many other newspapers far and near, and a Hackensack local journal said:

With all the expressions of sympathy for the poor whose scant savings were reduced by the thieving cashier, and the little left tied up in the meshes of a just but tardy law, none of our wealthy citizens—not even the most heated denunciator of the crime and the criminal—have given practical effect to their uttered feelings. Individual cases of suffering have been frequently mentioned, but beyond the meagre aid furnished by church societies, the victims of the Bergen Savings Bank have received a portion so insignificant as to escape public notice.

With this phase of the situation in mind, it is with an enhanced degree of gratification that we call attention to the act of Hon. Wm. Walter Phelps, who, hearing in a foreign land of the distress among his poor home-neighbors, views their condition from the broad plane of unselfishness, and flashes to them the cheering words, "I pity you to the extent of your loss," accompanying the message with the solid evidence of sincerity. This deserves the more positive commendation from the fact that Mr. Phelps believed that the deficiency in the savings bank would be much greater than at present indicated. But we know that he did not weigh the matter sordidly—his sole object was to give speedy relief to the suffering, and his action will receive no other interpretation from those who avail themselves of his generosity, if they are not wholly void of conscience.

In this day and community, such an exhibition of practical philanthropy from a man in no wise interested in or responsible for the shortcomings of the broken bank, naturally excites wonder and comment among those unacquainted with the gentleman; but to his friends it is no surprise—it is simply an additional proof that he is a *man*, clothed in that warm mantle of charity which is proof against the abrading contact of a selfish world.

The Englewood *Standard* said this:

Though compelled by ill health to be absent in a foreign land, Hon. Wm. Walter Phelps does more to help the people of this county than is generally supposed. About half of the 1078 depositors in the Savings Bank, who were for a time deprived of their savings by the conduct of Berry, and who had a natural fear that they might lose at least a large part of their reserves, are thus saved from loss or further inconvenience. There are not many men who have the true unselfishness for such an act of kindness, to persons for the most part personally unknown. Yet it is hard to conceive of a more truly benevolent way of using means. Those who are aided in this case, it is fair to presume, are in almost every instance persons who have deserved assistance in any emergency, because they have been frugal and industrious. To each of them, and to one or two thousand more who are dependent upon them, the mere advance of money which they would ultimately recover is a great relief. The sudden escape from prolonged and torturing anxiety, the assurance that they and their families are not to suffer whether the final settlement of the bank's affairs is to be near or long delayed, are benefits which cannot be measured in dollars and cents. The more fortunate, who have thousands in reserve, usually have also other incomes. But those who have deposits of only $100 or less, in very many instances have nothing else to protect them against actual suffering in case of sickness or failure of employment. Generosity is always admirable. But it deserves four-fold appreciation and honor where it is guided, as it is here, by a wise regard for the circumstances, the needs, and the probable merits of those to whom the helping hand is extended. Mr. Phelps has done many things to make the people of Bergen County respect and honor him. But perhaps he has never had opportunity to do any other thing that could show more clearly how well he deserves the affection which his friends in this county and elsewhere have for him.

In the *Atlantic Monthly Magazine* of July, 1881, was this paragraph:

Leaving the realms of prayer and faith, and returning to the palpable ground of good works, we actually have some magnificent charities. When the Bergen Savings Bank failed, Mr. William Walter Phelps, a politician and an office-holder, late a member of Congress, and now minister to Austria, himself, though entirely irresponsible for the loss, paid to the small depositors their dues. It is said to have cost him twenty thousand dollars, and from a business point of sight I do not see how it can be justified; but for solid happiness how can it be surpassed!

Mr. Phelps made a careful record of much that he observed in various countries and places, and he wrote in a letter from Florence:

I see lots of suggestions in building; and if I could only draw, how often I should jot them down for future use. . . . I 've been in many countries, old and famous and rich, but there is no country where the poor man has his rights and chances as in our own.

CHAPTER IX

Appointed Minister to Austria—His Real Estate in Washington—Assassination of President Garfield—Sympathy of the Austro-Hungarian Government and People—Generous Contribution to the Garfield Fund—A Tour in Oriental Lands—Resigns His Mission

MR. GARFIELD had been elected President, and Mr. Phelps had been informed by letters from Mr. Blaine early in the winter of 1881 that the Maine statesman would be Secretary of State. The new administration was inaugurated on the 4th of March. Mr. and Mrs. Phelps had been at Nice for some time, but had left for Florence in the early days of March, just a day previous to a very disastrous theatre fire at Nice. The newspapers published the following incident connected with Mr. and Mrs. Phelps's arrival at Florence:

When Mr. Phelps reached his hotel two cable dispatches were handed to him that had been forwarded from Nice. The first was from his friend, Mr. S. B. Chittenden of Brooklyn, which read: "Are you hurt?" This puzzled Mr. Phelps very much, for, having been on the road, he had not heard of the fire at Nice, and his friends in this country not having received any word of reassurance from him or Mrs. Phelps were much alarmed, fearing that he might have been at the theatre, and sent a cable dispatch to inquire. The second telegram was opened, which was unsigned, and contained these words: "Nominated Minister to Austria." This only intensified the mystery, and there was quite a wonderment for a time until Mr. John Bigelow, who had been wintering at Flor-

ence, came in and on being shown the dispatches exclaimed: "I can explain!" and then Mr. Phelps for the first time learned of the theatrical fire, and that he had received the unexpected appointment to the Austrian mission.

Mr. Phelps returned at once to the United States and went to Washington to receive his commission as Minister to Austria and the instructions of the State Department. It was while awaiting these formalities that he was induced to make an investment in Washington real estate. At the beginning of the march of improvements toward the northwestern section of the national capital, a distinguished member of Congress from Ohio bought a plot of ground on Dupont Circle, a locality then but very little developed. He became impoverished in health and somewhat in purse and needed to sell his land to a cash purchaser. It was then that the owner's friends, finding Mr. Phelps in Washington, persuaded him to advance the money and take the property at fully its value. Real-estate experts did not hesitate to say that the purchaser had allowed his sympathy to impair his judgment, but in a few years that section became the most desirable in the city, and in 1890 Mr. Phelps had disposed of most of this land for more than three times what it cost him. It was on a part of these lots that Mr. Blaine built his large and famous house. While owning the Dupont Circle property, Mr. Phelps bought for less than ninety thousand dollars some acres of land on the heights at the foot of Massachusetts Avenue, which was once part of a renowned country seat called "Kalorama," the home of Joel Barlow, a celebrated Connecticut statesman of the early days of the republic. This property was afterwards parted with in whole or in part at a satisfactory profit. Mr. Phelps made other large investments in Washington real estate, and at one period owned property in that city approximating in value one million dollars.

The comments of the leading newspapers and of public

men on President Garfield's selection for the Austrian mission were exceptionally complimentary. The choice was no doubt a wise one. Mr. Phelps had the patience and the tolerant disposition of a natural diplomat, together with tact, skill, and cleverness for seeing the right time and the right method in transactions. This is the way the commission read that Mr. Phelps received:

James A. Garfield, President of the United States of America, to William Walter Phelps of New Jersey, Greeting.

Reposing special trust and confidence in your Integrity, Prudence, and Ability I have nominated and by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, do appoint you Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States of America, to Austria-Hungary; authorizing you, hereby, to do and perform all such matters and things as to the said place or office doth appertain, or as may be duly given you in charge hereafter, and the said office to hold and exercise, subject to the conditions prescribed by law.

In testimony whereof, I have caused the Seal of the United States to be hereunto affixed.

Given under my hand at the City of Washington, the Fifth day of May, in the year of our Lord one thousand
(SEAL) eight hundred and eighty-one, and of the Independence of the United States of America the one hundred and fifth.

JAMES A. GARFIELD.

By the President.

JAMES G. BLAINE,
Secretary of State.

The new Minister reached Vienna in June and was most graciously received by the Austrian Emperor, with whom he could talk fluently in French, that being the customary language of the Austrian Court. The American Minister in a short time established himself in a magnificent home, having hired for a residence and for the business of the legation a marble palace, owned by one of

the princes of the Empire. He fitted it up with an eye to comfort as well as to elegance, and here the American Minister began to entertain officials of the Government and other guests with lavish hospitality.

Our Minister was barely settled in his new home when very early on a lovely Monday morning in July there came to the American embassy the startling news that President Garfield had been shot by an assassin on the Saturday previous. The sad news spread throughout Vienna with lightning rapidity. All the ambassadors and foreign ministers present in the capital; all the chiefs of the civil and military departments called at the legation, or left cards, or sent notes; while telegrams from every quarter where tourists seek protection from the invading summer's heat begged for information.

In European Court circles paramount are the rules of etiquette. Acknowledgment of each courtesy must be made before midnight, and for once a triumph of etiquette must be recorded in the annals of the American legation. Minister and secretary went post-haste to thread the quaint old lanes where high functionaries have their palaces, and told in different salons and in hurried breath the thanks of the Government and the hopes of recovery. In the meantime the young men of the legation had to get up steam to answer questions by letter and telegram.

Then began that long series of watches for Mr. Blaine's telegrams, which came daily, though at all hours of the day, and for the revelations of which the reporters of Vienna waited at the gates. During the hours and days of anxious expectancy that followed, the best of Austria never lost their interest, but called or sent to the Chancellerie of the Empire to get the contents of the latest messages from Washington.

When the September night brought the sad end of it all,—the death of the President,—there began the second series of diplomatic condolences. There was this difference, however, that the Minister had no need to return

the calls this time. Etiquette again. All the requirements of the occasion were fulfilled by his Excellency, the Minister, answering promptly and gracefully all who chose to offer their condolences in writing.

With his accustomed care for details and proprieties, Minister Phelps addressed a State document to the Department at Washington, giving a concise report of the attitude of the Austrian press on the great tragedy; the sympathy of the Emperor and Empress, the conduct of the Foreign Office, the Diplomatic Corps, especially the representatives of Great Britain and the Pope. This paper was worded as follows:

LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,
VIENNA, July 12, 1881.

To the Secretary of State,

Sir:

A telegraphic message from you to Mr. Minister Lowell and by him transmitted to this Legation, where it has just been received, gives us such assurance of the President's recovery as to encourage me to break the inaction of painful suspense. And the first wish—after expressing the gratitude and delight with which the Legation, in common with all their countrymen, welcome the good news—is to convey to the Department some idea, if it be possible, of the interest and feeling manifested for the President by this great Empire, its people and its government. And it seems to me not inappropriate that the archives of the Department should receive and retain some formal record of a natural sympathy at once so hearty and so universal.

Under that impression I have taken the liberty of noting in this dispatch some few of its more striking features. Horror at the deed and anxiety stimulated by the fluctuating character of the frequent telegrams as to the fate of the victim, filled the popular heart. It is true that popular feeling has not here so many ways to manifest itself as with us, but all were used to give it expression.

Telegrams of question and sympathy poured into the Legation and we were constantly occupied in sending replies, see-

ing anxious visitors and returning the visits of certain high personages with the promptness which diplomatic custom enjoins.

The press gave the news with great fullness, and accompanied it with comments that never failed to be friendly. Nor even after the forebodings of a fatal issue were removed, was there any reflection that could be construed other than friendly, unless the use of the occasion as a text to attack the character of our civil service, and the so-called "Stalwart" party as responsible for its defects. But in reflections of this nature, the Austrian journalists only kept in line with the press of the rest of Europe.

The Austro-Hungarian government, from its august head, through all it departments of internal and external administration, sought at all hours by note, messenger, or personal call, to obtain the latest news and to express continuing interest. I had the honor to telegraph the Department that, within a few hours after the news of the occurrence reached the continent, the Emperor telegraphed from Isehl, where he was visiting, for all particulars, and soon after by telegram instructed Count Wolkenstein to call to ask me to transmit directly to the President his Majesty's sympathy and good wishes.

I may presume to remind the Honorable Secretary, that I called his attention at the time of my first interview with the Emperor to the singular knowledge his Majesty had of the President's history and deep admiration for a character in which the conscientious habit of constant labor was the same to both Imperial and Republican ruler. Her Imperial Majesty was also considerate enough to send distinguished members of her suite for the same purpose.

These examples were followed by all subjects of conspicuous rank in the civil and by many in the military service.

I transmit herewith a list of some of the more conspicuous persons who called during the first day or two to express their respectful condolence.

I noticed that the newspapers here made the remark that the attack upon the President was "treated at the Foreign Office as an attack upon a legitimate sovereign." I certainly have seen nothing omitted by the Minister of Foreign Affairs

which would have increased my faith in his sincere sympathy. I transmitted to him copies of telegrams, as soon as received, and intelligent and appreciative recognition of their changing character were promptly returned.

All the members of the Diplomatic Corps were prompt and assiduous in their attentions.

Were it not invidious, where all had done and expressed so much, I should like to express my gratification at the peculiarly intelligent and sympathetic view of the case taken by the Ambassador of her Britannic Majesty and the Nuncio of the Pope. Perhaps it was the skill of scholarship that gave such delicacy and grace to the words of Monsignore Vanutili, but only a heart filled with love for a people among whom he had once labored could have given birth to the feelings they expressed.

I trust that all the words of congratulation and cheer which have already been exchanged by so many Austrian well-wishers for those of sympathy and condolence, to which I have referred, may not prove vain, and that the President may long live to enjoy the respect and admiration which the world has had an occasion to show him.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

WM. WALTER PHELPS.

When President Garfield died, after the prolonged suffering of many days, the American Minister sent to his Government a full account of what then took place at Vienna, in these words:

LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,
VIENNA, October 13, 1881.

To the Secretary of State,

Sir:

A lull in the varied manifestations in which this Empire has sought to show its sympathy in our national bereavement, suggests the propriety of transmitting to the Department a minute, which shall record, however imperfectly, some features of the strange picture.

The Legation received the first intelligence of the death of

President Garfield from Mr. Attorney-General MacVeagh, in a brief and informal telegraphic communication. By the same method, I promptly imparted the sad news to the Minister of Foreign Affairs. His reply, also telegraphic, promptly and heartily expressed his personal sympathy and gave the assurance that the people of Austro-Hungary were already sharing in the sorrow of the United States. I did not communicate Baron Haymerles' kind assurances to the Department, because in the same telegrams to which I have referred he was kind enough to inform me that the Austrian Legation at Washington had already been charged to communicate his Majesty's sentiments directly to our government.

Soon after, on receiving from the Secretary of State fuller particulars of the President's death, I prepared and sent to the Minister of Foreign Affairs a fuller communication, which should furnish to the archives of the Empire, to which I have the honor to be accredited, formal and official notice that on the evening of Monday, September 19th, at ten minutes before eleven o'clock, James A. Garfield, President of the United States, died at Elberon, New Jersey; that for nearly eighty days he suffered great pain and during the entire period exhibited extraordinary patience, fortitude, and Christian resignation; and that sorrow throughout the country was deep and universal, fifty millions of people standing as mourners by his bier. I also announced that President Arthur had already qualified and assumed office as his successor.

By this time the news was generally known throughout this vast empire, and from that moment all the resources of the Legation have been exhausted in the effort to note and properly recognize the various methods in which the different nationalities of this composite Empire sought to give sign of their sympathy and interest.

It seemed my first duty to provide some method by which our own citizens, brought to Vienna by various chances, might meet and solace their sorrow in a common expression and participation. In this distant city, there is generally no American colony, indeed the Legation has no record of a single American family resident here. And yet so penetrating and pervading was the idea of nationality, that a notice of little more than

eighteen hours found among the crowd of passing tourists and the young students of our hospitals, enough to fill the German Reformed Church, which was kindly and gratuitously offered for the use of the meeting.

The meeting was held Thursday, September 22d, at noon. The building was black with the festoons of woe, hung by Austrian hands that insisted upon the sad privilege. The chancel was hid in flowers, and among these surroundings, a band of American citizens, in a strange, though friendly land, gathered to think of their fatherland and to commemorate its loss. In my telegraphic dispatch of September 23d, I had the honor to inform the Department of these memorial services and to express my gratitude to the distinguished men who by a fortunate chance were in the city, and patriotically made a painful effort to give voice to the feelings of the occasion. Consul-General Weaver called the meeting to order; the American Minister presided. Appropriate remarks were made by Mr. Weaver, Judge Field of the United States Supreme Court, Whitelaw Reid, Charles A. Whitney of New Orleans, Edward King, Messrs. Taylor, MacArmor, Gillig, and others. A pleasing incident was when Mr. Fraser Rae, who had entered the room in company with Edward Jenkins, rose and asked that he might in behalf of Englishmen speak of the universal sorrow as one in which they claimed a share as kinsfolk. Resolutions were passed, a copy of which is hereto annexed. Other copies, initially engrossed on parchment, have been sent to His Majesty the Emperor and to Mrs. Garfield. The meeting was closed with prayer, led by the Pastor of the Church, in obedience to the custom, which from the foundation of our government has prevailed in solemn gatherings of American citizens.

In the meantime appropriate resolutions had been passed by Vienna and other municipalities; and since by the Diets of the various principalities composing this Empire. Some were presented in person, but more were transmitted in writing by the Presidents and Burgomasters of the respective corporations. All expressed similar sentiments of horror at the assassin's deed, regret for its results, and sympathy for the country and family deprived of their head. I noticed with peculiar pride many cases in which the loss was admitted to be not solely that

of a Republic that lost a great ruler, but that of the world that lost a great and good man. Styria, Silesia, and Nuder Oesterreich are some of the historic names which I recall with pleasure as those of peoples whose local parliaments were among the promptest to take official cognizance. In many cases, to add dignity to the act, the parliamentary confirmation was by a standing vote.

One of the earliest telegrams received was read to the International Literary Congress, then holding its sessions in this city, and amid manifestations of great sorrow, the session was adjourned for the day. But not these conspicuous honors, not the march of Emperor and nobles, of cities and parliaments as they wheeled into the world's funeral procession, were signs so touching and significant as the voices that came from humble Austrian homes.

To hear their utterance of spontaneous grief, sometimes in letter sadly lacking of pencraft but rich in eloquent feeling, sometimes in telegram, with careful and studied use of this unwonted method, sometimes from the lips of a man poor and illiterate, who came boldly to the Legation's Chambers, knowing that every man was there welcome who came to speak tenderly of an American President, this was a proud privilege which did not fail to soften the bitterness of my personal grief.

It was not official, but no single utterance of sorrow from foreign lips was more tender and comforting than a few lines from Julius Hubner, the president of the Dresden School of Fine Arts. An old man, famous in both continents, he had laid down his brush and seized his pen to tell how Art, too, joined in the general mourning.

Nor should I fail to call attention to the interest felt and expressed by our business population. This has been so marked in the experience of Mr. Consul-General Weaver that he has formally called my attention to it in a letter, a copy of which is enclosed.

I have mentioned only the incidents connected with the President's death and peculiar to it, or at least, not noticed by me in the early days of July, when Austro-Hungary joined with us in celebrating the probable restoration of General Garfield to health.

All the methods and incidents then used to show national interest and sympathy were again in activity. The press filled its columns with the news and with comments of sense and feeling. The diplomatic corps called or left cards, also many officials and nobles of the higher rank. But I made at the time so full mention of all these incidents in my dispatch No. 8 that I need not recall them, but beg leave to say in brief, that nothing was left undone that could show the deep feeling of this great Empire, a feeling which made it akin with the world.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

WM. WALTER PHELPS.

At the meeting of Americans in Vienna, called to express their sorrow at the death of the President, Minister Phelps, on taking the chair, said:

General Garfield is dead. A nation mourns for its chief magistrate and the world for a good man. It is proper that a little band of Americans happening to be in this distant capital should assemble to commemorate such a sad loss. We have changed our skies but not our hearts—the sky is Austrian, the heart American. We are caught by the circuit of national sympathy which to-day is experienced by all American wanderers, and connects them with fifty millions of their countrymen who in their own land stand by the grave of a murdered President. With them let us mourn for our country, but not as those without hope. The life of the nation is above and beyond that of any citizen. A bullet may kill James Garfield, but the institutions which nourished him are immortal. Never can they die until we forget the epitome of Republican duty which Rome formulated but could not follow, or we despair of the Republic, and cowardly let it receive detriment.

As soon as it was known that President Garfield was dead, steps were promptly taken in Republican financial circles to raise a fund for his family, which was not provided with abundance for their future. Hearing of this,

Mr. Phelps sent to the Chamber of Commerce, New York, a telegram in these words:

> Death has removed all danger of misconstruction. Let me subscribe five thousand dollars to the Garfield fund.

When Mr. Garfield's funeral ceremonies were over, Mr. Phelps at once telegraphed to the State Department at Washington his resignation of the Austrian mission. He believed that the new President, Mr. Arthur, should be left entirely untrammelled to select his own foreign ministers. The post in the first instance was conferred upon Mr. Phelps without his solicitation and unexpectedly. He accepted it reluctantly and wholly out of consideration for President Garfield, who was his personal friend, and with whom he had served in Congress. The appointment was not suggested by Secretary Blaine, but came directly from the President. The diplomatic and business relations between the United States and Austria were not of such weight and prominence as to give the representative of our Government at the Austrian Court matters of serious importance to consider. It was not to Mr. Phelps's taste to serve as ambassador to a Court where there was much etiquette and little serious diplomatic work. There was a supposition that Mr. Arthur would be a candidate for the presidential nomination in 1884, and Mr. Phelps knew that it was the intention of Mr. Blaine's followers to nominate him for the Presidency that year in spite of all obstacles. In this movement, Mr. Phelps expected to take a foremost part. Consequently, if he retained his mission, he would be placed politically in an unpleasant antagonism to his chief. Further, Mr. Arthur had been a protégé of Roscoe Conkling, and the inference was a fair one that under the new régime at Washington there would exist a political antipathy to the admirers of Mr. Blaine. Therefore to relieve himself and the President of all embarrassment, Mr. Phelps very judiciously, and with gladness, asked to be

relieved from his ministerial duties as soon as his successor could conveniently reach Vienna and assume the duties of the position. President Arthur received the resignation in the same friendly and courteous manner with which it was tendered, and the incident did not produce the slightest personal coolness between these two distinguished men who had for years enjoyed each other's friendship.

Judge Alonzo Taft, who succeeded to the Austrian mission, did not reach Vienna until a year after Mr. Phelps had resigned. In the meantime, the latter had become highly popular at Vienna, not only with the Imperial Government, but with the foreign ambassadors. He was the youngest of all the plenipotentiaries at the Austrian Court, but with his public experience at home and the knowledge he had acquired through his acquaintance with government affairs gained in foreign travel, he was the equal of any of the foreign representatives at Vienna in all that pertained to diplomacy. Many of his friends and acquaintances who happened to be travelling in Europe found their way to Vienna to meet his hearty welcome and enjoy his company. He gave the utmost care to the comfort and entertainment of American guests, gave elegant dinners to the officials of the government and the nobility, and the gay society of Vienna found him a very desirable accessory. He received in return conspicuous social and official attention. The Emperor invited him to a private dinner, and he was a distinguished guest at a banquet given by the Emperor to the English, American, and Italian ambassadors. A visit of the King and Queen of Italy to the Emperor of Austria made that a time of banquets, receptions, balls, concerts, dazzle, and Court etiquette. At a royal reception King Humbert had a long talk in French with our Minister, and Queen Margherita addressed Mrs. Phelps in English and told her how pleased she was with some of the American magazines for young people and said that she had her son read them.

A little later, Minister Phelps travelled for a short time in Germany and Austria, in aid of his investigations into the local governments of Austria, and his studies of the history of the smaller governments of which the great German Empire is composed. Then came a tour to Greece, Turkey, and Sicily, and finally his travels for the winter were concluded with a visit to Egypt and a trip up the Nile. His diary at this time is replete with records of the thoughts that were awakened in his mind by the scenes, the history, and the marvels of these old and interesting lands. At Palermo, where Garibaldi first landed to drive the Bourbon dynasty from Naples, and to carry unity and a liberal government to all Italy, he made this comment upon the great liberator:

> The world was his country; to do good his religion. Generous impulse more attractive than discreet service. Italy needed an example of unselfish enthusiasm, not statecraft. He was like a religious leader in the hold he had upon the people, reckless of any alteration in events. Italy looked up to him as the French did to Jeanne d' Arc.

At Constantinople, accompanied by the United States Minister to Turkey, General Lew Wallace, Minister Phelps was honored by being invited to inspect the Sultan's treasure in the vaults of the imperial treasury. This is regarded as a high compliment which is only vouchsafed to visitors of exalted rank. This collection of gold, silver, and precious stones in great variety has been looked upon as one of the wonders of the East, notwithstanding the reputed poverty of the Turkish Government.

At Cairo the American Minister was received with honor by the Khedive, with whom he conversed, the Egyptian potentate inquiring closely into our methods of government. The Minister was a guest at a great banquet given on Washington's Birthday by our Consul-General to Egypt and the American gentlemen who had been stopping at Cairo through the winter. The entire

Egyptian Cabinet was present. The Consul-General of the United States presided. On his right was Minister Phelps, and next to him the Prime Minister of the Khedive, and opposite the famous Arabi Bey, Minister of War. Speeches were made in English, French, and Arabic. The Rev. Dr. H. M. Field of New York, who was present, wrote to the newspaper of which he was editor: "The last speech was by Minister Phelps, who mingled wit and wisdom in such a way as to put everybody in the happiest mood, and formed a pleasant close to the entertainment." A new Khedive had been recently installed in power and his government just organized. Mr. Phelps in his speech referred to the late unsettled condition of Egypt and expressed the belief that "the man was now in position who would guide the ship of state safely through the troubled waters." The Egyptian authorities seem to have noted this compliment, for Minister Phelps, on his return to Cairo, wrote on March 18th to a friend in New Jersey:

> Down the river from Arabia and in a sea of accumulated letters. As I sat on a sofa to-day with the Khedive the same as I would with you, I was rather delicately reminded that I had made a forceful speech on Washington's birthday. This accounted for something that had surprised me, for all the way up the Nile I had banquets and illuminations, and salutes, and no end of speech-making. I now go to Beirut—Dodge's College — then Constantinople, Vienna, Carlsbad, and home, and the Congressional nomination if so it be.

After Mr. Phelps returned from his tour in the Turkish provinces, he made a written report to the State Department of what he learned of the conditions of trade and commerce in the East, as they affected business relations with the United States, and he dwelt upon the influence of American education in developing among Oriental nations a high regard for our country and everything bearing its name. This statement referred particularly

to the work of the American colleges on the Bosphorus and in Syria, and the educational labors of our missionaries.

Release from his ministerial functions came at last to Mr. Phelps by the arrival in June, 1882, of his successor, who was at once presented to the Emperor, to whom Mr. Phelps's letter of recall was delivered. This document was written in the high and mighty style of such State papers and read:

CHESTER A. ARTHUR,
President of the United States of America,
To His Imperial and Royal Majesty
FRANCIS JOSEPH,
Emperor of Austria, King of Bohemia, and
Apostolic King of Hungary.

Great and Good Friend:

Mr. William Walter Phelps, who has for some time past resided near the government of Your Majesty in the character of Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States, having been at his own request recalled, and being about to return to his country, I have directed him to take leave of

Your Majesty.

Mr. Phelps, whose standing instructions have been to cultivate with Your Majesty's government, relations of the closest friendship, has been directed to convey to Your Majesty, upon his leaving Austria-Hungary, the assurance of our sincere desire to strengthen the friendly feeling now happily subsisting between the two Governments. The zeal with which he has fulfilled his former instructions leaves us no doubt that he will carry out this, his last commission, in a manner agreeable to Your Majesty.

Written at Washington, this 8th day of May in the year 1882.

CHESTER A. ARTHUR.

By the President.
FREDK. T. FRELINGHUYSEN,
Secretary of State.

The late Minister informed the State Department that his successor had assumed the duties of his office, and with the courtliness that was natural to him, expressed his thanks to the Department for "uniform courtesy and assistance." This ended his official duties as Minister to Austria.

CHAPTER X

Discovers the Resting-Place of His Ancestor, John Phelps, at Vevey, Switzerland — Erects a Tablet to His Memory — Letter to His Children

WHILE Mr. Phelps was living in Vienna, he embraced an opportunity to do honor to a renowned personage of the ancient Phelps stock in England, from which he descended.

John Phelps, brother of William Phelps, who was the first of that name to come to this country, and was the founder of the Phelps family that was settled at Simsbury, Connecticut, was the private secretary of Oliver Cromwell, and also clerk of the court which tried Charles I. Upon the restoration of the Stuarts, he had to leave his home, with others who took part in the trial and condemnation of the King, and until recent years no trace of his subsequent whereabouts could be found. During his service at the Austrian Court, William Walter Phelps on several occasions exhibited his faith in republicanism in a manner that attracted the attention of other European capitals and the European press. Consequently some of these newspaper reports were seen by the secretary of the British Museum, and that official thought he saw in the character of the independent American diplomat something similar to the prominent characteristics of Cromwell's clerk. He therefore rather more than suspected that Minister Phelps was a descendant of the family of the illustrious John Phelps, and he wrote to the American

Minister, pointing out this resemblance. Then Rev. William Prior, at that time rector of the little Episcopal church at Vevey, Switzerland, heard of this correspondence between the American diplomat and the English secretary, and he wrote to the former that the remains of John Phelps were interred at St. Martin's Lutheran Church at that place. Minister Phelps had a careful investigation made, which satisfied him of this fact, and he applied to the authorities of the church for the privilege of marking with a handsome tablet the resting-place of the sturdy old Puritan. It seems that others of the tribunal that sentenced King Charles to death found a refuge at Vevey and were buried at this same quaint old church, and among them were Broughton and General Ludlow. The last named had put his name to the death-warrant of Charles and was one of the most illustrious of the parliamentary soldiers and statesmen in the revolt against that monarch. It is written that some of the refugees were a little timid over the record they had made in their native land, but Clerk Phelps was not. He was so proud of his participation in the trial of the King, and so willing that it should be known, that he wrote his name in full wherever it could be properly done all over the minutes and on all the papers of the trial. His fate as a refugee apparently was not a very hard one, and the end of Lake Geneva, where Vevey is situated, is not a bad place to live, and for that matter, to die in, after a man has done enough to justify his having been born, and the presumption is that old John Phelps had this feeling to the end.

The request of Minister Phelps was graciously acceded to by those in charge of the church, who very kindly displaced the record of some one not distinguished for aiding to put out of the way a bad King, so that the Phelps marble could be placed next to that of the heroic General Ludlow in the walls of the old church. It bears the following inscription:

In Memoriam
of him who, being with Andrew Broughton joint clerk of the court
which tried and condemned Charles the First of England
had such zeal to accept the full responsibility of his act
that he signed each record with his full name,
John Phelps.
He came to Vevey, and died, like the associates whose memorials
are about us, an exile in the cause of human freedom.

This stone is placed at the request of
Wm. Walter Phelps, of New Jersey, and
Charles A. Phelps, of Massachusetts,
descendants from across the seas.

Subsequently Mr. Phelps received from the secretary of the British Museum a copy of a print made at the time of the royal trial, in which John Phelps is represented sitting at the table in front and to the left of the presiding officer. The drawing was said to have been made by an eye-witness of the trial named Pye. This picture was hung in the Phelps library at Teaneck. As a companion to this picture, Mr. Phelps had another which was painted by Javurck, the best historical painter in Bohemia, and was presented to him when he resigned the Austrian mission by the American Consuls to Austria, as an appreciation of his gentle sway over them. The latter mementos were lost in the disastrous fire which destroyed the famous Teaneck mansion in 1888.

Having paid a generous and proper tribute to the liberty-loving old Englishman of his name, Mr. Phelps penned the following letter to his children:

Vienna, April 25, 1882.

My dear Children:

This solemn address does n't spring from the solemnity of my subject, but because our English tongue gives no less formal

style in which to group you when I don't want to rehearse all your names. Here is a copy for each of you of a little photograph that tells its own story. It represents a monumental tablet just put into the wall of old St. Martin's Church in Vevey, Switzerland, at my expense. The inscription tells pretty much the whole story that has any interest for us now. He was clerk of the memorable court that tried and beheaded Charles Stuart. He did his part with proud conscientiousness and had so noble a courage of his opinions that while he might have discharged his duty less conspicuously and have escaped in comparative insignificance terrible responsibility, he courted it and certified with needless frequency, and on every occasion, each proceeding of that august tribunal, with his full name in bold hand, "John Phelps."

I think we know all the intervening links between him and us. And in what quiet churchyards in our own and our mother country they all now sleep; the most, I think, in our own Simsbury, the line of grandfathers to the sixth remove. Exiled upon the return of the Stuarts, this John Phelps disappeared from his home in Tewksbury, and from the eyes of his descendants. By chance, during my residence here, I heard that with Ludlow, Broughton, Gove, and other regicides, he fled to the shelter of the Swiss republic and ended his life by the waters of the placid Leman in the little village of Vevey. And now these actors in that stormy scene sleep together far from the country where their bold deed made constitutional liberty a sure British possession. The tablet of our ancestor is next to Ludlow's. I caused Mr. Charles A. Phelps's name to be associated with mine in the inscription, because to his loyal zeal in research I owed the discovery. Besides he is a worthy descendant of the worthy regicide and has himself done good service to the state. I send with this a letter of his, written upon receipt of one of the photographs, which shows at once the singular sweetness of his nature and a few of his graceful accomplishments.

Not knowing how heartily I am a democrat at heart, believing unreservedly in the equal rights of all men, and that position and honor should be awarded to each according to his own character and achievements, you may wonder at the

pleasure I experienced in finding and putting into our lineage an ancestor more than two centuries dead. I admit a warm pride in my ancestry and do not see that it is at all inconsistent with these political sentiments. I am proud of my ancestors because they were all honest and useful men, who loved their country, and in their stations—often humble ones—did their duty. And the recollection of these virtues, which form a family inheritance of great value, is a pledge, in a certain sense, for the good behavior of their descendants. When a man has such hostages given for his conduct, it is an inducement to keep him in the path of honor. Often a man would be desperate enough to stain his own record, and yet hesitate at the thought that the stain would trickle upon and stain his forefathers. So every man who had good ancestors should cherish and cultivate their memory.

Your affectionate father,

Wm. Walter Phelps.

CHAPTER XI

Urged to Again Enter Congress—Pathetic Letter to a Friend—Consents to Be a Candidate—Elected to the Forty-Eighth Congress, after a Vigorous Campaign, over a Popular Opponent

AS soon as Mr. Phelps sent to Washington, in 1881, the resignation of his Austrian commission, letters began to be showered upon him by his political admirers at home, and from the most influential party men of his district, insisting that they should be permitted to announce him as a Republican candidate for Congress in the election of the following year. He remained a constant martyr to ill health, and while abroad he had made up his mind no longer to pursue a public career—to forego politics, except so far as he might be able to assist Mr. Blaine to the next Republican presidential nomination, and it was with the latter view only that he was keeping a close watch upon political affairs in New Jersey. For himself, he had a wish to go back to his ample estate at Teaneck, and settle down permanently to the life of a country gentleman, and for diversion going back to his first love—the law, the successful practice of which, circumstances some years before had compelled him reluctantly to relinquish. He thought he would like to resume the study of legal and economic questions and write upon them for law journals and periodicals which made a specialty of such literature. But under the importunities of his confidential friends and old political associates who had stood by him so loyally, he began to have doubts as to which was his duty. While in this

frame of mind, he wrote from Vienna, in January, 1882, to one in his district whom he knew had his best interests at heart and who was a representative of a circle of his truest friends, the following:

You ask what are my plans. They are uncertain, as must always be the plans of a man with no better health than I. This is most likely to be the result. My successor to get here —say in March. I would travel until May. Then May and June to Carlsbad, getting home say about July 10th. This can be altered—only if nothing to alter it, Carlsbad ought to be taken, for it does me undoubted good.

If I sink my preferences and go again into politics, then I do it only upon your express understanding to run the machine. By this I mean you and others must tell me what to do in the active work and I will do it. This is for two reasons. First, I 've no confidence of my scent in practical politics. Second, while you need n't tell Mrs. Phelps, I 've such a wretched body, even at the best, that there is very little work or go in me. This lack or weakness affects me more in the inclination than in the execution; so that while I would sit still and do nothing, if I waited for my own suggestion, yet if I were prompted to something, I could still pick up and do it with some force. Therefore, if you want to enter such a spavined colt, do it, knowing you must jockey the run. Again, because of this lack of physical stamina for aggressive and continuous political effort, I want to let the United States Senatorship, for which my name has been suggested, drift. If you decide to enter me for the Congressional race, then inform me. I shall leave it to my friends when, how, and to whom to make the announcement—or no announcement at all. You can manage everything as you see best. But it will be better for my health if I can spend the summer at Carlsbad.

Here were breathed the pathetic yearnings of a robust mind in a frail body, and scarcely hidden in all is the saddened belief of the man in his innermost soul that, hampered as he was, he still had in him capacity for great work for his country and mankind. It was not Mr.

Phelps's habit to make plaint of his bodily infirmities, therefore it should be kept in mind that this was a private letter to a most confidential political friend and adviser at a crisis which was likely to be a turning point in the writer's political fortunes. Mr. Phelps correctly diagnosed his own case. When his mental energies were awakened to an arduous task, so intense would be his desire to accomplish it that his physical inertness would seem temporarily to vanish and his force of execution become truly marvellous, and this would continue day after day, until the work in hand was finished. No one could ever perform more vigorous and persistent mental labor when he was once aroused to its necessity. After the date of the rather despairing letter just quoted, he did some of his greatest work in statesmanship and diplomacy, and his achievements stand forth conspicuously in the history of two continents.

Those who knew Mr. Phelps best sincerely believed that with his active mind, and at his age, he would chafe in retirement, even to a point of danger, and that his health would be likely to be better and his life prolonged by active employment in public life, a sphere for which he had such eminent fitness. They consequently resolved that the Rubicon should be crossed, and word was sent that when he should come home he must expect to face a Congressional canvass which would be managed and made as easy for him as possible. He then wrote to the recipient of his former letter:

> I will sail for home on the *Elbe*, August 30th. I choose that date because I get very eager to see Teaneck before the frost can possibly take the leaves from the trees which have two years' growth for me to see.

It was always the trees of Teaneck.

This entry is found in his diary: "1220 steerage passengers. Two babies died. Reached New York 8 A.M., Saturday, 9th of September."

The primary elections for delegates to the Congressional convention were called soon after Mr. Phelps reached home. John Hill was again a candidate. He had supporters who used all their endeavors to have delegates elected who were favorable to him in Passaic County and in his own county of Morris. In the latter he obtained most of the delegates. The Hill interest in Paterson was aided by one or two disappointed office-seekers, whose enmity originated during Mr. Phelps's first term in Congress. He met also the antagonism of a small body of Republican silk manufacturers, who were alleged to have had a grievance against him on a point of etiquette growing out of an occurrence when they went as a committee to Washington on one occasion when he was having his first Congressional experience. Their efforts at the primary meeting were futile, and Mr. Phelps obtained almost the entire body of delegates from Bergen and Passaic counties, and his nomination was made in the convention without difficulty. The successful candidate did not attend the convention, so that its choice could be entirely free from any influence his presence might create. He was informed of his nomination by a committee and in response to their written notification he said:

I have received the kind letter in which you communicate to me the honor which the Fifth New Jersey Congressional District Republican Convention have done me, in unanimously nominating me as their candidate for Congress.

And I find enclosed a copy of the resolutions which the Convention adopted as the sense of the party in the District.

I accept the nomination so generously offered without solicitation or effort on my part. I did not think it right to seek it, but I should think it wrong, after receiving it, to omit any honorable effort to secure an election.

Striving to follow the example of the young men of the District, to whom I am informed I owe in a great measure my present position, I shall immediately begin a personal canvass,

in the hope of meeting in each school district the people, whose interests I seek the opportunity to represent. The frankness with which in an earlier Congressional experience, I expressed my sentiments on most national issues, and the industry with which friendly and unfriendly papers, during the succeeding years, have canvassed any public expression I have since had occasion to make of them, renders it unnecessary for me to do more, than to say that I still advocate:

A fair, free, and full election everywhere, no matter which party it helps or hurts.

A reform of the Civil Service which shall make the tenure of office, during the term of appointment, co-eval with the capacity and honesty of the office-holder.

A watch over the Public Treasury which shall guard its money, its lands, all its assets against private and corporate assault.

An improvement of the currency, so that no creditor shall be forced to receive any dollar worth less than a dollar in gold.

And protection, in the interest of labor, for our young and varied industries.

On reading your platform, I see nothing in it at variance with these my life-long sentiments, and nothing therefore which I cannot approve and work for.

The Democrats, thinking to create a factional diversion in the Republican ranks through the disaffection of the combination of Paterson silk manufacturers, nominated for Congress John Ryle, a leading silk manufacturer, who had once been a Republican, and as such, Mayor of Paterson. He learned the business of a silk fabricator in his native England, emigrated to Paterson when young, and there became the pioneer of the silk industry in this country. He was English in build, manners, speech, and force of character, but withal a patriotic American and enterprising and most widely known citizen, respected as a man for his intelligence and integrity. He was well along in years and his ambition was stimulated by the suggestion that he should round out his life,

as the saying is, with a term in Congress. The silk manufacturers largely rallied to Mr. Ryle's support and contributed liberally to his election fund. A Prohibition candidate, in the person of a popular Methodist minister, was also put in the field, whose candidacy could only divert votes from the Republican nominee. Altogether the opposition to Mr. Phelps seemed to be a formidable one. But his campaign was being managed by confidential advisers who knew the district, the temper of the voters, and their confidence and pride in Mr. Phelps, and these managers never for a moment believed that with the canvass the Republican candidate was making, defeat was possible. Mr. Phelps seconded the efforts of his friends industriously and energetically. He met and talked with the people of the three counties in their homes and at all kinds of gatherings. His pleasant and unaffected manner gained for him a cordial reception among all classes and made him more popular than ever. At a great mass meeting held in the Opera House, Paterson, October 24th, the Republican nominee for Congress began his speech in these words:

Eight years ago, after the tidal wave that had swept seventeen Republican States from their moorings and made it almost an act of heroism to vote the Republican ticket; in the face of a long and heated canvass; after earnest efforts had been made to bury me under the odium of wealth and prosperity; in the face of persistent efforts to turn every humorous allusion, in what they are pleased to term my witty speeches, and every kindly word in which a young representative expressed his cordial regard for a most partial constituency, into words of arrogance and contempt; with the hostile newspapers holding in standing proof at the head of their columns extracts from speeches skilfully selected and printed so as to pervert their meaning—what was the result? This district gave me one thousand votes more than a popular Republican candidate for Governor. A thousand independent men left their party ranks for the purpose of stamping their reprobation on such

injustice. This was the answer which the people gave to these old slanders eight years ago—and the answer was so emphatic, that I shall not attempt to improve it. And this, gentlemen, is the only personal allusion I shall make this evening, and I make it now, because this is my first opportunity to thank the loyal city of Paterson for the conspicuous part it took then.

He then proceeded to make an exposition of the position held by the respective parties on the tariff question, showing in his most concise style the danger that would threaten the protective industries of Paterson from a Democratic majority in the House of Representatives. This address had a damaging effect upon the Democratic campaign.

The Democratic leaders knew what the success of Mr. Phelps at this time would mean—the loss of the district to them probably so long as he might be a candidate, and they did not intend, if they could by any means prevent it, that he should gain another foothold in Congress. For this reason the contest became, in some measure, of national importance. The Democratic press attacked Mr. Phelps most venomously and endeavored to rouse a prejudice against him in the ranks of labor because he was a rich man, notwithstanding his Democratic opponent was also a man of wealth. These tactics were always used against him in all his campaigns, but it was never perceptible that this sort of arraignment was ever successful in drawing away from him the votes of the wage-workers. He had an amazing popularity with that class from first to last.

The colored voters who had opposed him in 1874, because he voted against the Civil Rights Bill, had come to realize their mistake and now gave him a hearty and almost unanimous support. The campaign was conducted up to the very eve of the election with unceasing vigilance and energy. It was plain to close observers, two weeks before the voting, what the result would probably be, but

those who had the Republican cause in hand meant that the victory should be such an overwhelming one that it would discourage and stamp out all future factional opposition by the Republican followers of Mr. Ryle, and when the time came such a victory was won.

It is but fair to say that the silk manufacturers who opposed Mr. Phelps at this election were afterwards among his warmest and most effective supporters.

The counting of the votes disclosed that Mr. Phelps had run ahead of his ticket in all the counties of the district, as he had done in his previous contests. Bergen County, although it remained a Democratic stronghold, gave him a handsome plurality. In Passaic County, the average Republican plurality was but 288; that of Mr. Phelps 639. In the whole district the general Democratic ticket had an aggregate plurality of 357, but the total majority of Phelps over Ryle was 1638. This victory, under all the circumstances, was one that Mr. Phelps and the Republicans had good reason to be proud of, and again, for the third time, the result at the polls afforded undoubted proof of the confidence and respect of the great mass of the voters of the Fifth District of New Jersey for the distinguished citizen of Bergen County.

CHAPTER XII

His Road-Building around Teaneck—His Offers to Englewood Start the "Good Roads" Movement in Bergen County and over a Million Dollars is Spent as a Result

IT would be more than a year from the date of the election to the opening of the new Congress in which Mr. Phelps would be a member. This interim gave him a coveted opportunity to devote considerable time to the development of his large property in Bergen County, and to enhance the beauty and add to the conveniences of his homestead acres, where he was making improvements without a parallel in individual enterprise in the State. He devised and carried out plans of road-making which created a network of thoroughfares through his whole estate. He did not confine his enterprise to his own lands, but labored to have his neighbors enjoy the benefits of his progressive ideas, and as a consequence he became the pioneer of good roads in Bergen County.

When he came to New Jersey the roads were noted for red mud in some sections and deep sand in others. He immediately set about creating a sentiment for public road improvement. He attended meetings of road boards in his own and neighboring districts, and urged macadamizing instead of expensive dirt road repairs which never resulted in lasting benefit. When his persuasion began to show an influence and the voters authorized what to them appeared to be liberal appropriations, Mr. Phelps stepped in with an offer to duplicate any additional sum they would name. This practice was kept up to the end

of his life, and an example of his persistent and generous encouragement to road-making is given in the following letter:

BERLIN, January 22, 1891.

TO THE CITIZENS OF ENGLEWOOD:

In my recent visit to my home, I had great pleasure in seeing everywhere the signs of progress. I do not want to see it stop. In the hope of encouraging this spirit of improvement, I respectfully submit the following offers:

1. I will give one-third of the amount necessary to buy, on the west side of the station at Englewood, the land necessary to make a park corresponding to that already made on the east side.

2. I will give one-third of the amount necessary to buy a steam roller for our road-making.

3. I will give one-third of the amount necessary to be raised by popular subscription to secure the new station at Linden Avenue or Railroad Avenue:—Either situation seems to me a fit one.

4. I will pay half of the expense necessary to dredge the canal, which is the main channel of our sewerage. As this offer was rejected last year, although this work is admittedly necessary to the health of Englewood, I can think of but one reason. I am ashamed to mention it, but answer it by saying that a moment's inspection will show that I have constructed ditches on both sides of the canal, by which my low lands are drained whether the canal be deepened or not.

5. I will pay one-half of the expense necessary to macadamize Cedar Lane from the track of the West Shore Road to the Hackensack River.

6. I will give one-half of the cost of a village monument to our dead soldiers, on the lines laid down by Col. John D. Sherwood, if in it the claims to honor of James Harrison Dwight, priest and soldier, be conspicuously represented.

WM. WALTER PHELPS, of Teaneck.

This method inspired the people of adjoining districts to engage in friendly rivalry in stone road-building, and as they were giving to the limit of their taxable ability,

there was no feeling of dependence upon their generous neighbor.

The recognized influence of an object lesson, especially upon the public, was soon manifested on all sides. The fine hard and dry roads of Englewood township (of which Teaneck township was then a part) spread rapidly throughout Bergen County, and it has ever since shown a larger expenditure for macadamized highways, without State aid, than any rural county in New Jersey. The total expenditure for building roads in the county since the work was started in Englewood exceeds a million dollars, all cheerfully voted by taxpayers who were educated up to the idea by the one influence.

Of thirty miles of road on the Teaneck estate, about eight miles are macadamized, the other portion being dirt or grass roads. These included Sheffield Avenue, from the mansion to Nordhoff; the Diagonal road from the residence to Englewood; West Englewood road, from the residence to West Englewood; Hackensack road, from the residence to the Hackensack River; Bennett road, from the residence to Englewood; Demarest road, three miles long, from the residence east through the woods, and the Fyke, then south over hills, and down near the West Shore road, connecting with nearly all other roads to North Cedar Lane.

In addition to these principal roads, dirt and grass roads extend throughout the estate in every direction, arranged with such system as to make access to all parts of the estate easy. Miss Phelps was fond of horseback riding through the woods, and her father spared no pains to cut wide and widening bridle-paths through the most deeply shaded woodlands, that she might, as he hoped, be always able there to indulge in her favorite exercise and pastime.

One of the most important of Mr. Phelps's contributions to road-building is Cedar Lane, connecting Teaneck road with Hackensack at Anderson Street bridge. This was

originally the crudest imaginable thoroughfare, over which traffic was possible with any degree of safety only under the most favorable weather conditions. Mr. Phelps widened it and cut down steep grades, filled in the depressions and macadamized it, making one of the finest highways in the vicinity. The outlay for this two miles of work was $35,000, the figures indicating the extent and thoroughness of the work.

The difficulty of obtaining stone during the earlier period of this road-building enterprise was such that Mr. Phelps had to adopt his own measures. In several instances he induced farmers to join in the good-roads movement by offering to work highways if they would furnish field stone for foundation. Then he purchased a stone-crusher and established it on the Palisades, where the supply of trap-rock is inexhaustible.

A road in which Mr. Phelps took especial interest is that extending from his later residence to the armory at Englewood. It is three miles long, abounds in picturesque effects and views, and is entered through a stately stone lodge. All the private roads of the estate were thrown open to the public for pleasure driving, use of the bridle-paths even being permitted to horsemen. Large numbers, increasing yearly, avail themselves of these privileges. The private character of the Grange drives is maintained by several artistic gate-lodges, built at points of intersection with public thoroughfares. These lodges are artistic in design and contribute largely to the beauty of the surroundings.

While utility was the prime consideration in road improvement on the Grange and connecting highways, beauty of effect was not lost sight of, the artistic sense of the owner being ever present where its influence would contribute to the attractiveness of a scene. This is seen in the many bridges throughout the park, about sixty in number, some of them wood, but many of stone; several of these are quite imposing structures.

Next to the love for trees on his estate, Mr. Phelps manifested this strong sentiment for good roads. His correspondence with the manager shows this persistently. Travelling in far-off lands, he never forgot his New Jersey home and plans for its improvement and beautifying were being constantly evolved. He wrote from California, in the summer of 1885: "I am going to make the connection with the Teaneck road—our puzzle—as direct as possible, even if I have to cut deep."

This determination to "cut deep," wherever Mr. Phelps's acute judgment saw opportunity for improving the material or æsthetic surroundings, culminated in a series of stone and turf drives unsurpassed for views, romantic and picturesque, and to him every mile of those broad and level roads and tree-lined paths was a constant delight.

CHAPTER XIII

Re-enters Congress in 1883 and again Becomes Prominent in the House—Presents a Bill to Establish Civil Government in Alaska—First Appropriation for a National Building in Paterson—His Memorable Fight for the Relief of General Fitz-John Porter—Smooths out Troubles with Bismarck—Important Committee Work to Establish the Manufacture of Ordnance and Armor Plates in this Country—Famous Speech to New Jersey Farmers—Farming for One's Country

IN the spring of 1883 the affairs of the district began to claim the attention of the Congressman-elect. Letters were numerous, asking his aid for all kinds of things that were wanted from the Government. The demands for those who had claims for pensions were many, and to these he gave a patient hearing and faithful support. Of the many private bills for relief that he introduced and had passed at the eight sessions of Congress where he was a member, by far the larger number were for the benefit of old soldiers, whose cause he was ever ready to plead. A well-known leader among the veterans of Morris County wrote to the editor of a local journal in 1884:

On January 31st I wrote a letter to Hon. William Walter Phelps pleading that he would use his influence, his voice, and his vote in behalf of the Union soldier of the late war in all just measures introduced in Congress for his benefit, and on February 4th he wrote me, from the House of Representatives, the following reply:

"My dear Sir:

"I have read your letter with much interest, and sympathize with you heartily in all efforts that are made to provide for

those who suffered either by sea or on land in the country's cause. Nearly all the cases in our district have received very kindly treatment, and the number of orphans and widows whose homes are made comfortable by the monthly stipend is very large.

"Yours truly,

"Wm. Walter Phelps."

I trust the old comrades will make a note of this kindly letter, and the manly feeling toward them expressed in it, and in November next remember the author.

The newly elected Congressman had also to encounter the constant demand for public documents, a vexation from which no Senator or Representative can free himself. His predecessor had left him the quota for his district of the government seeds, the distribution of which is always a great bother, and he found at this time that there were at least a dozen lady applicants for every package of flower seeds at his disposal. His reputation for politeness and courtesy had increased his difficulties, hundreds of requests coming from outside his own district. To one of the newspapers he had occasion to write:

It looks as if the whole State of New Jersey wanted flower seeds. I have requests from all the counties in the State, and am at a loss what to do. Of course I have not seeds enough for the demand in my own district, and cannot well accede to demands outside it. That does not trouble me, but it troubles me that these outside applicants who write such pretty notes should think they were entirely neglected, and yet I cannot answer them.

Late in 1883 Mr. Phelps went to the Adirondacks for a short stay and returned in time to attend the Republican State Convention to nominate a candidate for governor. He strongly urged the nomination of his predecessor in Congress, Hon. John Hill, who had many other ardent advocates. But the convention named

Judge Jonathan Dixon, which was not a fortunate choice, as the result of the election afforded abundant evidence.

Before December, Mr. Phelps went to Washington to look for a dwelling. Just as he found one he thought suitable, he heard from a house on the next street in the rear the noise of a brass musical instrument, evidently being played by a learner. He then declined to take the house, as he said, laughingly, because there came to his mind the published quotation from the famous Spurgeon: "Can a man who practises for a brass band get into heaven? No reason why he should n't, but very difficult for his neighbors."

The Congressman, however, secured a desirable house on Massachusetts Avenue, which made him a home of comfort. Here he entertained generously and handsomely, and there was no more hospitable mansion in the city. Distinguished men, in and out of Congress, were welcomed there and his guests were from the world over. He was especially popular with the Diplomatic Corps and it was said that he could speak to half the members in their own language.

The Forty-eighth Congress assembled December 3, 1883, and Mr. Phelps was in attendance. It was now ten years since he had first appeared at the national Capitol to take a seat in the House of Representatives. Since then there had been marked changes in Congress and in the country. In several instances, the principles he had struggled to maintain in the Forty-third Congress had been adopted in the government policy and been put in practice by legislation. In finance the country had been educated up to his views, and his financial theories had been formulated into law. Specie payments had been resumed, the national credit upheld, and a stable currency established. The national debt was being constantly diminished and the rate of interest upon it decreased. The movement for the abolition of the moiety methods in collecting the revenue of the country, which

he had inaugurated and eagerly promoted, had been successful, and importers of merchandise were no longer blackmailed and fleeced by harpies protected by law. The losses and destruction of the Civil War had been regained and repaired. Commerce and all the industries of the country had responded to the improved policy of the Government. Business was being expanded in every direction and the republic was making astonishing progress in wealth and prosperity.

Mr. Phelps, with his years of busy intercourse with the moving influences of the world in his own and other countries, had come to a wider experience and a larger information and his character was more fully rounded out. But his lofty purposes were the same, with enlarged abilities to carry them into effect.

Great, also, were the individual changes in the House. The leaders in the Forty-third Congress were the leaders of neither party in the Forty-eighth. Of Mr. Phelps's old Congressional associates some had died, a few had gone up to the Senate, many had been retired to private life. Mr. Garfield had been made President and become the victim of an assassin. Mr. Blaine was a private citizen, busy preparing his famous book which recorded his recollections for many years of public men and events.

Conspicuous among the Democrats of the House now were Randall, Carlisle, Curtis, and Hewitt; among the Republicans, Reed, McKinley, Dingley, Kasson, and Hiscock. There were others of great talent on each side.

The Congressional elections in 1882 had generally been disastrous to the Republicans and there was a large Democratic majority in the House. The very able John G. Carlisle was chosen Speaker, and Samuel J. Randall, the strongest intellect and the most skilful parliamentary manager among the Democrats, was the leader of the majority.

The new Speaker, at the start, recognized Mr. Phelps's

knowledge of foreign matters and made him one of the members of the Foreign Affairs Committee. He was also placed on the Committees on Civil Service and on the Tenth Census. Early in the session he was complimented by the Speaker in being appointed one of the Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, of which body of scholarly men Chief Justice Waite and Senator Edmunds were members.

A few days after the House was organized, Mr. Phelps introduced a bill providing for a civil government in the Territory of Alaska, to be simple in form and inexpensive. One distinctive feature of this bill was that it committed the education of the native children to the United States Commissioner of Education. This interest had been grossly neglected. Under Russian control there were schools. When the United States took possession, these schools, which had been sustained by the Russian Government, were abandoned and none took their place. This grave omission had been noticed and deprecated by the leading churches and missionary societies of the country. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church had appointed a special committee to wait on Congress and solicit action. Interest in various ways had been manifested by the Baptist, Methodist, and Moravian Churches. A like bill was introduced in the Senate. The provisions of both bills were finally incorporated in one and passed and a civil and civilized territorial government was thus established in Alaska.

At this session Mr. Phelps presented a bill for the erection of a Federal building in Paterson. It was not an auspicious time for such a procedure, as Republican members were not favored in that overwhelmingly Democratic body in having granted to them appropriations for public buildings. Notwithstanding the discouraging circumstances, Mr. Phelps used every exertion to forward his bill, but met strenuous and persistent opposition from one or two spiteful majority members of the Committee

on Public Buildings and Grounds, who, after an appropriation was agreed to, were determined that the New Jersey member should not get his bill up before the House for consideration. He persevered against all obstacles, and although failing in that House, he succeeded in the next Congress in obtaining the first appropriation for the handsome and commodious Federal building that is now an ornament to the lively, industrial city of Paterson.

There was before the House what was called a bill for the relief of Fitz-John Porter. It may be recalled to the memory that General Porter, commanding the Fifth Corps of the Union Army at the battle of Manassas, more familiarly known as the second battle of Bull Run, was charged with disobedience of orders and neglect of duty, and by sentence of court-martial was dismissed in disgrace from the army. These proceedings were taken in a time of passion when the North was smarting under the reverse that General Pope had met with at Manassas. Some one had blundered and a scapegoat was in demand, and in an hour of despondency and gloom, the country was easily made to believe that Porter was a traitor. After the war came a reaction in favor of Porter, and in the highest military circles it was felt that his case did not have the impartial consideration that would have been given to it at a time when the passion of the people was not unduly aroused. Generals Grant, Schofield, Terry, Slocum, Rosecrans, and scores of other prominent Union officers, after a careful review of the testimony and in the light of revelations made subsequent to the court-martial, came to the conclusion that Porter was sacrificed on insufficient evidence and by a tribunal misled by testimony taken in an atmosphere of defeat, "sitting within the roar of the enemy's artillery." A Board of Inquiry, appointed by President Hayes, consisting of Generals Schofield, Terry, and Getty, made a careful inquiry into the facts and reported that justice required the setting aside of the find-

ings of the court-martial and the restoration of General Porter to his former position in the army. On this report was founded the bill reported to the House by General Slocum. Practically the same bill was introduced in the Senate by General Sewell of New Jersey, an officer of the Union Army whose patriotism and bravery no one will have the hardihood to dispute.

The bill was not acceptable to the general mass of the Republicans, who had no opportunity and no inclination to examine the evidence coolly and critically, and the Republican politicians and office-seekers still found in denunciation of Fitz-John Porter much useful political capital. The bill was warmly debated by the best speakers of the House day after day in January and came up for final action on February 1st. Mr. Phelps was selected to make one of the closing speeches for the bill. His intuitions were invariably accurate, and in reasoning upon any matter, a calm and final conclusion seldom evaded him. In this case he made no reliance upon this faculty, but putting aside as many demands upon his time as possible, for three weeks he gave every moment he could spare to the tiresome work of reading the voluminous testimony taken at the court-martial. Therefore when he arose to speak in concluding the debate, he stood there not only as an orator, but as a lawyer, giving a most thoughtful and keen analysis of the testimony that had been produced at the court-martial. Fitz-John Porter was a resident of Morristown, New Jersey, and Mr. Phelps, in the beginning of his argument, said:

> It is my duty to speak to-day for Fitz-John Porter because he is my constituent. It is at the same time a pleasure and an honor because he is my friend, and I believe him to be an honest man and a loyal soldier.
>
> It was twenty years last week (Monday) since the last signature was put to the verdict of a military jury which drove him out of the Army and made him a leper which his Government should never touch with an office of trust or profit. This

verdict awarded him such infamy that for a while Iscariot and Arnold were his only competitors. A blundering Department furnished to an anxious President, a baffled Army, and an indignant people this sacrifice; and fifteen millions straining unto death to save their country in an hour of supreme despondency and gloom found a momentary relief in cursing the name of Porter.

Who was this sacrifice? One whose ancestry deserved well of the Republic; one, who as a boy of gentle heart and ways learned in the National Academy to hold a stain upon his honor as a wound, and to conceive all honor as sphered in loyalty to his country; one, who as a youth stood the most chivalrous and accomplished officer in a guild whose military code gives to the testimony of a member under oath no greater force than his formal declaration; one who in manhood won wounds and glory in the field, and who on the 27th day of August, 1862, as said the gentleman from Michigan, "stood the consummate flower of the American Army and its pride." This was the gentle, chivalrous, illustrious soldier who was thus lifted up into a storm of obloquy and reproach as a traitor to his country. What can he do? His fate is worse than Arnold's or Judas's. Arnold, hating his country, fled from it and received the rewards of treason; but Porter loves his country, and has no thought except of loyal service. Judas went out and died conscience stricken; but Porter's conscience is clear, and remorse refuses to lead him to the field of blood. He does what an honest man ought, and only an honest man can do; he takes up his burden and bears it. He will live, and live down his wrongs. He will wait, and trust to God and his country for redress. He withdrew to the quiet of a New Jersey village and established his home. There he faithfully discharged all his duties, neither seeking nor shunning observation. He was a good husband, a good father, a good neighbor, citizen, and friend. That little village for twenty years has watched, honored, and loved the man. They have seen his eye grow sad and his hair grow white with hope deferred. But he never talked of his grievance nor asked for pity. He was fulfilling a sentence which, for such a man, Edward Everett truly said, was "in some respects worse than a sentence of

death." This was his home life. His life abroad was a constant struggle to regain his good name. That was his mission, and he prosecuted it without pause or rest. On every proper occasion, in every proper place he declared his innocence, offered his evidence, and asked for examination.

The testimony of Generals Grant and Sherman bearing on the case, and the written opinions of some of the most eminent lawyers of the day, were quoted by the speaker. He pictured the valiant deeds of Porter on many battle-fields, and then concluded his remarks in these words:

Mr. Chairman, the chief of the rebellion walked down the steps of this Capitol threatening to return and destroy it. He attempted its destruction and failed. Yet Jefferson Davis walks in freedom. Men who penned our soldiers in Andersonville and Libby still live.

Officers trained at West Point, whose treason is not investigated, for they practised it from the Mississippi to the Potomac, sit in this House. Shall Porter, innocent in heart if erring in act, alone be punished? Must he be a sacrifice for a nation?

The hero of Mexico and Malvern and Manassas asks only for justice; if you refuse him justice, I plead, against his wishes, for mercy. Take this innocent man from the side of Judas and Arnold and place him by the side of those who honor him—by the side of Getty and Sykes and Terry and Schofield and Grant.

The most rabid of the Republican journals condemned Mr. Phelps in no sparing language for the stand he took in defence of the disgraced soldier. Other newspapers of the same party, but of cooler judgment, expressed their regrets at his course mildly, but the unprejudiced press, as a whole, commended his plea for Porter and all acknowledged its marked ability. It met with the approbation of the New York journals, and the *Tribune* correspondent said:

Mr. Phelps had not been speaking many minutes when men

began to walk over from the Democratic side, and during the last half hour of his speech he was the centre of a large group of Representatives who were anxious to lose none of his telling sentences in behalf of Porter. The speech was a model of terse and vigorous eloquence, clear, logical, and polished. Toward the close Mr. Phelps's delivery became more animated and he made his points with an energy that awakened enthusiasm from the jury he was addressing. He was repeatedly and heartily applauded, and when he sat down everybody who had listened to the entire debate was ready to declare that this was the best speech ever made in behalf of Porter. His frankness and willingness to admit points which seemed to tell against Porter disarmed his opponents and made them almost willing to accept the explanations offered in his behalf.

The scene in the House was a very exciting one and the newspaper correspondents at Washington may be left to describe it.

The Boston *Advertiser:*

Fitz-John Porter sat in the gallery for more than eight hours this afternoon and evening. At the close he received the congratulations of scores of friends that, after all these years, the House of Representatives, by more than one hundred majority, had done all in its power to make reparation for the injustice toward him for years. It was a proud moment for him. His eyes glistened with old-time lustre as he looked over the balcony and heard the verdict given. All day long the parliamentary battle had raged. The spectators could almost see the clash of arms and hear the thunder of artillery, as they were depicted by the hot debaters. Marengo, Balaklava, Bannockburn, and all the great battles of history were appealed to for illustrations. The handling of troops, the headlong charge, the duel of artillery, the surges of victory and defeat could almost be felt as the veterans of the war fought their battles over again, charging again and again to restore or to further disgrace Porter. On the Republican side the party whip was cracked to keep this one man down. Grant was belittled, Schofield accused, Porter hissed at, in the hope of

making a little party capital at the expense of this one old man. Federal soldiers pleaded Porter's cause, and Republicans voted for his restoration. Among Porter's friends were nineteen who had fought in the Union army,—three generals, seven colonels, three captains, and six privates. Of the New England members, thirteen were for Porter and but nine against him. Calkins made his speech, significant only for his notice that the Republicans might call out General Sherman as their presidential candidate, and then William Walter Phelps made the speech of the whole debate. Beginning with studied coolness, it was soon apparent that he had mastered the subject; while members recalled his reputation as an orator, the listlessness disappeared around him. As he stood in the front row, the seats filled and members came in from the cloak-rooms, while Keifer and Calkins went out. The Democrats came over from their side and made an admiring circle in the area. At his front Slocum, Cox, Mills, and others stood listening to his plea. Mr. Morse's two little boys, playing about their father, stopped and watched Phelps with open-eyed admiration. His voice could be heard in every corner as he told of Porter's heroic career, and showed how, at Gainesville, he had done his duty; aye, more than that, for his discretion had prevented what might have been a catastrophe. With galling emphasis he read from the Comte de Paris's revised history, praising Porter; the author whom Calkins had praised as fair when he read from the old editions, written before the Comte had seen the new evidence. He offered opinions from O'Conor, Reverdy Johnson, Sidney Bartlett, and other great lawyers, regarding the court-martial verdict. Then, in conclusion, he pleaded for Porter because his vindication is but just, and then because it is but mercy to a man who has suffered enough. "Give him back," he said, "to his old Fifth Army Corps, who have loved him and will so long as one man remains. Take him in from the Iscariots and the Arnolds, and place him with our Getty, our Terry, our Schofield, and our Grant." And, while the house and galleries trembled with applause, Phelps looked up once at Porter and sat down, while a crowd of both parties shook his hand and rejoiced at the best speech for Porter ever heard in Congress.

The Detroit *Free Press:*

The debate in the House to-day was the most interesting of the session. The members were present in unusual numbers and many Senators were upon the floor. The galleries were occupied to the last seat and many people stood up. Perhaps the engrossing nature of the proceedings will be best shown by the fact that hundreds of the audience remained from the commencement to the close, seven and a half hours, in their seats. In point of logical arrangement, elegance of diction, strong presentation of facts, many of them new, and scholarly delivery the speech of Wm. Walter Phelps, of New Jersey, was the best of the whole series of speeches upon the bill.

The Boston *Journal:*

It was by far the most effective one on that side, and the most eloquent of the session. The latter part of Phelps's speech was animated and eloquent, and drew not only hearty applause from the galleries, but brought around him nearly every member present. They stood before him in crowds and listened to every word. If a vote could have been taken at the close of his speech probably many who had made up their minds otherwise would have cast a vote for Porter.

The Boston *Herald:*

His speech was an admirable argument, clearly and eloquently expressed. He delivered it very gracefully. Interest in it in the crowded galleries and on the well-filled floor increased as he proceeded. Members left their seats and crowded around Mr. Phelps, and he grew more and more eloquent, until at the close they thronged about him and shook his hand until it was tired. Old members of the House said to-night that Mr. Phelps made to-day one of the best speeches in the House since the war.

The Cleveland *Leader:*

William Walter Phelps established himself as one of the great speakers of this Congress by his defence of Fitz-John Porter.

A New Haven journal:

The best speech during the debate was that of Mr. William Walter Phelps of New Jersey, and in some sort of Connecticut, as he has a fine old homestead at Simsbury. He fairly tore to pieces the misrepresentations of Cutcheon and others, opponents of the bill, and while never departing from parliamentary courtesy, he convicted them of either the grossest and most culpable ignorance or deliberate falsehood.

A prominent Philadelphia paper said:

That speech was one of the most brilliant that Congress has heard for many a day. Broad, grand and elastic with human emotion, it touched every chord of a manly heart. Based on simple justice, solidified with common sense, and scintillating flashes of surprising beauty, that speech will take its place in history as one of the ablest and most original in its happy construction that ever was delivered in our national Congress. New Jersey has a right to feel proud of William Walter Phelps.

The Albany *Argus:*

William Walter Phelps showed himself to be a very able speaker, a thorough scholar, and a charming wit, by his speech in Congress years ago on the Franking Privilege. The speech on Fitz-John Porter was very able, manly, and true.

A Washington newspaper said editorially:

William Walter Phelps's speeches in the present Congress have attracted more attention than any of the session in either House. His defence of his neighbor, Fitz-John Porter, was made with delicacy and warmth, and exercised a civilizing influence over party divisions, setting the way for patriotic differences across party lines.

Many pages could be filled with extracts from impartial newspapers approving the independent and courageous action of Mr. Phelps in this affair, and praising the

eloquence and skilfulness of his defence of the unfortunate general.

A joint resolution was introduced by Mr. Phelps authorizing the Secretary of War to assist in cancelling the debt and enlarging and improving the grounds and collections of Washington's Headquarters at Morristown, N. J., and in securing suitable ground on which to gather the remains of Revolutionary soldiers there buried, and in erecting monuments over the same.

There came up in this House for settlement a very vexatious matter, made important only by circumstances. In the early part of the winter, Dr. Eduard Lasker, a distinguished member of the Liberal party in the German Parliament, died while on a visit to this country. Whereupon one of his admirers in the House offered some resolutions of sympathy with the body of which Lasker was a member, and in the resolutions were a few words of commendation of Lasker's political principles. At a glance, the resolutions seemed to be harmless. Little attention was paid to them and they were passed. It seems that the resolutions had to be transmitted to the American Minister at Berlin and by him presented to the German Foreign Office, and through that channel sent to the Parliament. Lasker was probably nearly or quite a Socialist, and the German Chancellor Bismarck declined to deliver the resolutions because it was held that Lasker's political principles were dangerous to the Government and injurious to the German people. In sending the resolutions back, the Chancellor said that he would have gratefully received and transmitted them had they concerned only the personal qualities of the departed statesman, but that he was reluctantly obliged to return them because they contained an estimate of Lasker's political views, which the Chancellor believed to be incorrect, and having that belief, he felt that he had no authority to transmit them to his Parliament. Matters were additionally complicated because the members of the Liberal Union of

the German Parliament had passed and sent to the House a memorial containing an avowal of their appreciation and hearty thanks for its action upon the death of their deceased associate, and also expressing their cordial good wishes to our people. Here was a dilemma. The hot-headed members of the House wished to stand by its first action, but those of more sober judgment felt that the House had carelessly, but unintentionally, done something that could be construed as offensive to a friendly Power. At this juncture, the ex-Minister to Austria, with his knowledge of diplomacy and his familiarity with the methods and etiquette prevailing in foreign official departments, was prominent in unravelling this tangle. In the Foreign Affairs Committee he suggested a resolution which was reported to, and adopted by the House, to the effect that the original resolutions were intended only as a tribute of respect to the memory of an eminent foreign statesman who had died within the border of the United States, and an expression of sympathy with the German people, of whom he had been an honored representative; and further, that the House having no official concern with the relations between the executive and the legislative branches of the German Government, did not deem it requisite to its dignity to criticise the manner of the reception of the resolutions, or the circumstances which prevented their reaching their destination. This was accompanied by another resolution, intended to make all smooth with the German Laskerites by saying, "That the House cordially reciprocates the wishes of the Liberal Union of the members of the German Parliament for a closer union of the two nations, and recognizes their graceful appreciation of its sympathy with those who mourn the death of Eduard Lasker."

A very felicitous and adroit speech was made by Mr. Phelps in advocacy of these resolutions. He argued that they contained no word of apology and no word of insult to the German Empire, and that the receipt of the

memorial of the Liberal Union was acknowledged with a reciprocation of all the cordial wishes which it contained. This he said was a pathway in which we could walk out of the slough pleasantly, and make the atmosphere warmer and all things rosier between the two nations. This speech seemed to melt away the opposition; the resolutions were adopted, and this queer parliamentary incident ended.

Late in the session a resolution was adopted creating a select committee, with extensive powers to sit during the recess of Congress, and in any place, to inquire into and investigate the matter of ordnance; the capacity of steel works in the United States to produce metal of suitable quality and sufficient quantity of high power, and for metal plates and armor for war vessels; to inquire into all matters concerning the capacity of our navy yards for manufacturing armament for war vessels and seacoast defences, and to report the best localities in the United States for building large guns, engines, and iron and steel ships of war. This Committee as appointed was composed of some of the most competent men in the House, including Samuel J. Randall, Abram S. Hewitt, Frank Hiscock, William Walter Phelps, Thomas B. Reed, and Charles F. Crisp. The Committee was continued through the succeeding Congress and in these continuous years performed a great deal of very important and valuable work. Much time was given to the testing of cannon and armor plates by experts. American manufacturers were encouraged to compete with the Krupp works, and as a result of the labors and investigations of the Committee, Congress passed various bills for the manufacture in this country of ordnance, armor plates, and armored vessels, thus giving an impetus to the reconstruction of the American Navy, which has since become so formidable in its great armored ships.

When midsummer was reached, Senators and Representatives became anxious to get home to look after their

own re-elections and to take part in the presidential contest of that year, which had already begun, and a final adjournment took place July 7th.

Notwithstanding he was busy with his public duties, Mr. Phelps, at the request of the New Jersey State Board of Agriculture, took the time to make an address at the annual meeting of that body in February, 1884. This annual meeting always brought together a large number of the most intelligent and progressive agriculturists of the State. The theme of the speaker was: "New Jersey, Her Farmers and Her Farms." In his opening remarks, Mr. Phelps said that he did not claim any superior knowledge of agriculture derived from its practice, yet he could not entirely exclude himself from the guild of farmers. He could not recall the time when he did not own a piece of land, which he tilled always with pride, though not always with profit. His conviction was that every citizen of a republic who deserved well of it should, even at a sacrifice, supplement his other activities, however pressing and numerous, with a little agriculture. He believed if it were a sweet and honorable thing to die for one's country, so it was to farm for it, and he had acted accordingly. The reason of the ancients, when they made this practice one of the tests of republican character, yet exists. Agriculture is still the basis of national prosperity, and duty calls upon the patriotic citizen who succeeds in the forum, the market, or on the field, to use some of the resources he has won there in fostering agriculture.

Mr. Phelps used much information and many statistics bearing upon his subject, derived from the Agricultural and other public departments at Washington, and some of the topics upon which he discoursed were: Roads, fences, trees, farmers' profits, home and foreign markets, Western advantages and disadvantages, and a comparison of New Jersey's crops with those of other States. He pointed out the special advantages of New Jersey for

farming, showing that there was no necessity for her sons to "go West" to become prosperous farmers.

This address was published in pamphlet form for general circulation and it was uniformly referred to in flattering terms by the newspapers, excepting the ultra free-trade journals, which excepted to his declarations that protection to American industries builds up cities, increases the profits of farming and the value of land. A leading New England agricultural journal said: "The agricultural address of the Hon. William Walter Phelps has attracted more attention than any other address of its kind." Among the criticisms from other newspapers were these:

The Newark *Advertiser:*

No other agricultural address attracted so much attention and brought out so much comment. The speaker narrated many interesting facts, showing by the census the farmers of our State to be worth more than those of any other.

The Morristown *Jerseyman:*

Through a mistake, we did not receive a sufficient number of copies of Mr. Phelps's great agricultural speech to supply our subscribers; but as more have been ordered we expect to accommodate all. There appears to be one opinion with reference to this speech—that it surpasses any effort of its class ever presented to the public. Wherever it is discussed, in public print or private conversation, it is the subject of praise.

The Newark *Journal:*

The speech of Hon. Wm. Walter Phelps delivered early in the last month before the State Board of Agriculture at Trenton, is full of interesting and instructive matter. It calls so strongly for permanent and continuous attention, that nothing has been lost by our taking such time as we have, to carefully peruse and consider it. It does not belong to the sensational and ephemeral literature of the day. It is a comprehensive, and powerful presentation not only of questions strictly agri-

cultural, but of others only broadly and perhaps remotely so, as those of general public policy; in fact it is the work of an able patriotic statesman. All may not agree to Mr. Phelps's position, but all will, we think, concede his sincerity and that his positions are most ably sustained.

The New York *Tribune:*

A most forcible plea for the diversification of American industries was recently made by the Hon. William Walter Phelps at Trenton. He discussed the relations of agriculture to other industries and proved by official statistics that the prosperity of the farmers, not only of New Jersey but of the United States, was attributable in large measure to Protection. This masterly address, the full text of which appeared in the *Tribune*, was the most powerful argument which has been addressed to American agricultural classes since Mr. Greeley's fingers were stiffened in death.

Mr. Phelps's conclusions are fully confirmed by the February report of Mr. J. R. Dodge, Statistician of the Department of Agriculture.

The Jersey City *Journal:*

Mr. Phelps takes clear and strong positions and presents strong grounds in their support. He seems determined to prove what he says to the satisfaction of his hearers; and his opponents will admit he comes as near to that as anybody. He disclaims all oratorical display, and certainly nothing is indulged in of the "High Falutin" or "Spread Eagle" order: but as a statesmanlike view of all the policies of the country in connection with agriculture, we must look for its equal to the days of Henry Clay.

The Trenton *Times:*

Congressman Phelps showed the agriculturists of the State last evening that he was thoroughly posted respecting farm economy and the means by which farm land can by made exceedingly profitable. Mr. Phelps's discourse was timely, thoughtful, and decidedly entertaining.

The Newark *News*:

For his really interesting and carefully prepared address on agriculture the farmers of this State should be grateful to Congressman William Walter Phelps. He has given them what must be most gratifying information concerning their own wealth and the agricultural resources of the State.

From a New York newspaper:

Representative Phelps, of New Jersey, delivered an address on farming yesterday which will surprise even his warmest friends by its ability and mode of treating topics usually considered commonplace and threadbare. Indeed, when one remembers how many addresses have been made on similar occasions and on the same topic, it is remarkable to meet with a speech so new and interesting as well as strong as the one fully reported to-day. The statistics which Mr. Phelps presents are full of interest, and will attract the attention of farmers in every part of the country.

The Philadelphia *Press*:

The recent speech of William Walter Phelps before the Agricultural Society of New Jersey has attracted wide attention. It was an exceedingly clear and cogent exposition of the great value of Protection to the farmers. The Republicans might do much worse than nominate Mr. Phelps for Vice-President.

CHAPTER XIV

The Eno Embezzlement—Mr. Phelps's Successful Efforts to Save the Second National Bank of New York from Ruin—A Financial Panic Averted by his Skill and Energy

IN 1884 Mr. Phelps figured grandly in an affair wherein his business activity and generosity relieved the distress of many people and saved the community from a financial panic.

On Monday, May 12th, while he was in the House, a messenger handed him a telegram which read: "Come immediately to New York," and was signed by Amos R. Eno. Mr. Eno was his father's old business partner and relative, a solid man of many millions, who had never sent him a dispatch before and had scarcely written him a letter. He knew that such a message from Mr. Eno meant trouble of the most serious kind. In a moment he suspected that it meant disaster to the Second National Bank of New York City, of which Mr. Eno's son was president. So, greatly distressed and perplexed, Mr. Phelps left immediately for New York. Arriving in that city late in the evening, he went at once to Mr. Eno's residence, where his coming was expected and the family were all up. In a few minutes he heard the startling intelligence. On Sunday, the day previous, John C. Eno, the young president, when he found that his defalcations could no longer be concealed, confessed his crimes to his father. He had defaulted to an amount without precedent and that challenged belief. He had squandered the money of his brothers and sisters, which was in his charge,

had made away with more than a million and a half of his father's personal securities left for safety in the bank safe, and had embezzled three millions of the bank's ready cash, and not one dollar of any kind of securities was left to represent the loss.

The father was at first astounded at the son's confession, then mortified, then enraged, only finally to become heart-broken over the ruin of his boy, and the blemish on his family name. He did not know what to do for twenty-four hours, and turned for support to one much younger than himself, and looked to the son in time of difficulty as he had often looked to the father years before. This was the situation as William Walter Phelps found it when he heard the revelations of his father's old partner.

What was to be done? There was a loss of over three millions to be made up to a bank whose capital was only $300,000. The deposits were four and a half millions, and these had to be paid, or else three thousand depositors, of whom perhaps two thousand were women—many of those widows and orphans—must be made to suffer. This suffering would not be confined to depositors, but the fall of a bank which enjoyed as high credit as any other financial institution in the land would precipitate a panic which might inaugurate a general national suffering and prostration of business. Mr. Phelps then thought of nothing except to save the country from this loss. For some years after his father's death he had been a director, but with the understanding that nothing was to be expected of him in the way of superintendence or care. But for some time he had not been a director. When Mr. Eno put his inexperienced son in as president, the understanding was that the father would take entire charge and responsibility, and this guarantee from a man of such unvarying honesty and worth so many millions seemed to be satisfactory. But Mr. Phelps's thought of any moral responsibility on his part was soon lost in his earnest desire to save a panic.

He spent many hours in persuading Mr. Eno, an old man of seventy-three years, that it was better for him instantly to pay the whole than to be, through his son, the occasion of such suffering. Hours went by and he pleaded warmly, and all the children sincerely joined with Mr. Phelps in his efforts to induce the father to make the sacrifice. All his kin, without any hesitation, told him that they preferred absolute poverty rather than to inherit money which had been saved at the cost of the name of the family. The next morning the father yielded so far as to agree to pay two millions if the stockholders would pay one. It seemed hopeless to get one million of dollars from them, because their extremest legal liability was $300,000. But it seemed worth while to try and the forenoon was spent by Mr. Eno and Mr. Phelps in efforts to save the bank. The latter in the afternoon drove to the residences of the leading stockholders to ask for their co-operation. He was met everywhere with the natural reply: "It is Eno's fault. His son was put in at his request. We understood him to guarantee any loss from his son. We will pay our legal part and no more." Mr. Phelps in each case offered to pay one fifth of the sum, but it was in vain, and he returned discouraged, to struggle with the heart-broken father. He induced Mr. Eno to raise the amount he was willing to contribute and then arranged for a meeting of the leading directors and stockholders that evening at the house of Mr. Isaac N. Phelps, a quiet residence not likely to attract the attention of reporters, who had, however, heard of the place of meeting, and when the gathering was ready to proceed to business at eight o'clock, there were seven reporters from the prominent journals of the city waiting on the steps and in the vestibule of the house.

The discussion was long and full of difficulties, and there were constant alternations of hope and despair. Some would do nothing, others a little, and Mr. Eno, who was present with his counsel, stolidly refused to do

more. Mr. Phelps offered to put in $200,000 if the rest could be raised. The offer was not accepted. After midnight, when the meeting was about to adjourn without a decision, Mr. Phelps and the counsel for Mr. Eno took the latter into another room, and after this consultation and at the last moment, he consented to give $2,600,000 if the rest were raised. Then, in private interviews, stockholders and directors who were unwilling were induced to make certain promises which Mr. Eno required; that was, that each stockholder present should pay in cash three times the amount of his stock, and then Mr. Eno would pay the remaining deficiency.

The reporters were informed that the deficiency had been provided for, and the meeting broke up. Day was breaking, but Mr. Phelps could not go to rest, for arrangements had to be made for the rush which would the next morning crowd the corridors of the Second National Bank. Presidents of trust companies and bank directors sleeping in freestone mansions around Murray Hill were awakened and told the facts. It was the time of a financial depression, when the banks were doing their utmost to be ready for a threatened panic. Not a bank or a trust company refused aid to the extent of their ability when Mr. Phelps asked them, as his coupe rattled in the sunrise hours from house to house. Mr. Eno had no security to give for money, as his securities had all been taken. He would give his notes and would meet them by mortgaging property, a part of which was the great Fifth Avenue Hotel, as soon as it could be done. Mr. Phelps would give his own name as security.

Before nine o'clock Mr. Phelps, with Mr. Amos R. Eno on his arm, started for the bank. A crowd had already gathered and they could enter the building only through the aid of policemen. The bank was opened at half-past nine, although ten was the legal hour, and the payments began. The first money received in aid of the bank was $90,000 in greenbacks, which came up early from Mr.

Phelps's office. This was his contribution toward making up the deficit. He subscribed it first as an example to other stockholders to come forward. Everything at the bank was going along well until a little after ten o'clock, when consternation came to all the directors in the bank and to Mr. Eno, when a draft for $95,000, which had been accepted by the Clearing House and cashed, was brought in. It had been drawn by the president the afternoon before, and after his confession of guilt to his father. But it was an additional loss to be provided for. In his despair, Mr. Eno broke down and no entreaties could move him. Yet they must raise the extra amount or the bank must close. The National Bank examiner stood pale with the rest. No one present felt able to assume the additional burden. The examiner said: "I must close the doors then." But after a moment's pause, the examiner approached Mr. Phelps, who had just contributed $90,000, and saying, "It is cruel to ask it after you have done so much, but the fate of so many depends upon it, can you not make another effort to save the bank and avert the consequences of its closing?" Mr. Phelps then said to Mr. Eno: "I will share this with you." After consulting with his counsel, Mr. Eno consented and the examiner congratulated Mr. Phelps, saying that the last rapids had been passed and everything was saved. Mr. Phelps consequently became responsible for $47,500 more, and Mr. Eno's note for an equal sum was accepted by the Clearing House.

Money that had been promised came pouring into the bank all the forenoon, and its doors were kept open until six in the evening. The next day the run on the bank ceased and its customers were making deposits.

Mr. Eno subsequently reimbursed all the stockholders for the amounts they paid consequent upon his son's misconduct, and some years after sent Mr. Phelps a check, with interest added, for the $47,500 he had paid as a last act in rescuing the bank from insolvency, but Mr. Phelps

was not repaid the $90,000 he voluntarily and without solicitation contributed at the very start of the efforts to save the bank. Mr. Phelps tried to keep the part he took in the transaction as quiet as possible and from the newspapers, but his beneficial action was understood in banking and business circles and he received from financiers all over the country letters of appreciation and thanks.

A letter published in the papers from John A. Stewart, President of the United States Trust Company, said: "If Walter Phelps lives to be a hundred years old, he will never again have the opportunity of doing so big a service to this community, and indeed, to the country, as he did last Tuesday."

CHAPTER XV

The Blaine Presidential Campaign—Phelps's Brilliant Work for His Friend —Caricatured and Maligned—The Sealed Letter—Hard at Work in Congress—Recuperating in California

IT was well known in the spring of 1884 that the name of James G. Blaine would be brought before the Republican National Convention of that year for the presidential nomination. The sentiment of the party in New Jersey was not unanimous. Senator Edmunds of Vermont had supporters. Mr. Frelinghuysen, President Arthur's Secretary of State, with United States Senator Sewell, and nearly all the Federal office-holders, advocated the nomination of Mr. Arthur, but the preference of the rank and file of the party was plainly for Blaine. Mr. Phelps attended the New Jersey State convention, and although the delegation there chosen for the national convention was divided in their preferences for President, the Blaine men predominated, and Mr. Phelps was one of the delegates.

Mr. Blaine himself did not want to be a candidate in the contest this year. He did not wish to keep out of public life, but he had a feeling that the office of Secretary of State was one of nearly equal dignity, though of less conspicuity, than the Presidency, and he believed that to him would easily fall the first position in the Cabinet of a Republican President. But this was not all. With his almost supernatural insight into coming public events, and his thorough knowledge of political uncertainties, there became impressed upon him various forebodings of

defeat. His confidential friends were not unaware of his feeling. In the winter of 1884 he wrote a letter to Mr. Phelps, asking the latter to use his discretion in making it public at a proper time, in which he asked that his name should not be brought into the convention as a candidate. Mr. Phelps was one of those who held firmly to the opinion that a man of Mr. Blaine's mental gifts and executive capacity ought to be President, and not sharing his friend's forebodings of defeat, he consulted with other Blaine leaders, when it was found that the movement for the nomination of the Maine statesman had gone too far to be counteracted and his letter was not made public. Mr. Blaine was easily put in nomination.

Weeks before the assembling of the convention, when the nomination was foreshadowed as practically certain, he was assailed by the opposition press and politicians in the most malignant manner possible. Not only his private character, but his public integrity was impeached. Old, exploded, and forgotten slanders were revived, but the main charge against him was that he had acquired stock in a Southwestern railroad as a price of certain rulings he made while in the Speaker's chair, when legislation affecting this corporation was pending in the House. When these accusations were fresh and were aimed at Mr. Blaine in 1876, they were brought before the House and disposed of completely. What was more than anything else reprehensible in their revival at this time was that they were set on foot and encouraged by jealous rivals who were at the head of factions in the Republican party inimical to Mr. Blaine.

Mr. Phelps did not hesitate to appear at once as the champion of his esteemed friend, and as he had long known all about these charges of years before, he was able to initiate a sound defence of the great Republican leader. His first statement was made public through a letter to the New York *Evening Post*, which had greatly

fostered the warfare upon Mr. Blaine. Of this letter the New York *Tribune* said editorially:

The letter of the Hon. William Walter Phelps given to-day, treats with courteous severity the stale slanders of the *Evening Post* against Mr. Blaine. No other man in the country could have spoken with greater weight on this matter. His own high character, the keen sense of honor which has more than once compelled him to sacrifice personal interests to a sense of duty, and his close personal knowledge of Mr. Blaine's business affairs for many years, more than justify him in saying: "I think I may claim some qualifications for the task. I have long had a close personal intimacy with Mr. Blaine, and during many years have had that knowledge and care of his moneyed interests which men concerned in public affairs are not inapt to devolve upon friends who have had financial training and experience. I do not see how one man could know another better than I know Mr. Blaine, and he has to-day my full confidence and warm regard. I am myself somewhat known in the city of New York, and think I have some personal rank with you and your readers. Am I claiming too much in claiming that there is not one among you who would regard me as capable of an attempt to mislead the public in any way? With this personal allusion—pardonable, if not demanded under the circumstances—I proceed to consider your charges."

Mr. Phelps arrayed his facts with crushing force and showed that Mr. Blaine had not the slightest interest, present or prospective, in the railroad in question at the time of the action in Congress. He proved that Mr. Blaine acquired his interest as an investment years afterward, precisely on the same terms as others, among whom were some of his then accusers. This defence of the Republican presidential nominee was quoted and criticised by nearly every newspaper in the country. Mr. Blaine's supporters maintained that it was a complete vindication of their chief, and his enemies denounced it, asserting that it was a lame and mistaken defence. The warfare

of slander and vituperation against the Republican presidential candidate was carried on industriously and relentlessly until the close of the polls on Election day. During much of the campaign the enemy's guns were trained upon Mr. Phelps, as well as the friend whose cause he was upholding, and he was a great deal of the time under a shower of abuse and defamation. If the New Jersey Congressman had never before enjoyed a national reputation, he certainly acquired it now through the widespread attention he received vicariously from the opposition press and platform speakers.

After the election, one of the leading newspapers of the day said:

> Hon. William Walter Phelps of New Jersey was the best caricatured member of Congress in the last campaign. *Puck* literally kept his picture, or rather, a farcial representation, continually in its pages. Consequently his uncertain Congressional district gave him the most flattering majority ever given to any Congressman in Northern New Jersey.

Early in the campaign Mr. Phelps went to Bar Harbor for a consultation with Mr. Blaine; then he came home and took the stump. His regard for Mr. Blaine had aroused him to a brilliant activity. The Republican candidate's superb mentality, his services to his party and his country, his earnest championship of a protective tariff, his long and useful experience in public affairs, and his grand and intense Americanism, were some of the subjects that inspired Mr. Phelps's glowing and impressive oratory. He spoke in all the counties and in all the towns of any considerable size in New Jersey. In all the chief cities he addressed immense audiences and was received by the people everywhere he went with ovations and demonstrations of welcome. He spoke almost daily from the middle of September until the election and with telling effect. It was assumed that he was to some ex-

tent a personal representative of the Republican presidential standard-bearer.

Conditions seemed to the Republicans to promise certain success, but the contest was an unusually heated one. On the eve of the election there came rolling from the tongue of a fanatical and officious cleric the three famous and fatal "R's"—Rum, Romanism, and Rebellion—when too late to counteract their baneful effect.

On the night of the election, Mr. Phelps went to the office of the *Tribune* in New York to hear the returns. He was accompanied by his young daughter, who had the closest and warmest sympathy with her father in all his political undertakings, aspirations, and ambitions. As the news came into the editorial rooms that evening, where there was a gathering of noted Republicans, disappointment and gloom began to gather on the faces of those present. The returns received up to midnight were not positively decisive, but discouraging, and Mr. Phelps and his daughter remained in the city all night. The later returns the next morning were just a little more hopeful, but not conclusive. Then followed several days of doubt and conflicting reports. It was, however, developed that New York State held the balance of power, and it also became known that Mr. Blaine had the State by a handful of votes. General Butler had been running for President on a Greenback-Labor ticket. In the slim plurality for Blaine was the opportunity of the skilful and practised manipulators in New York of election returns. A few hundred votes transferred from Butler to Cleveland and the work was done, and there vanished all reasonable hope of James G. Blaine ever reaching the Presidency of the United States. There was never a more pointed instance of the great mischief that is sometimes wrought by small incidents, nor a better illustration of the axiom that there is nothing certain in politics that has not been made history.

The whole chapter of Mr. Blaine and the Presidency

may be closed in the following words from an eminent writer:

> Nothing can ever take from him his position in the first rank and stature of the public men of our country. He will be involuntarily remembered and honored among the class of statesmen of America for whom the conditions surrounding were so fashioned that they did not become Presidents. He was one of the very few the people expected to reach the Presidency, by reason of his strength and personal primacy, and were disappointed that he did not. It was a distinction for him, as for Clay and Webster, not to be President.

Mr. Phelps had been renominated for Congress by his party by acclamation. His own canvass called for little personal attention and gave him no concern. In working for the cause in the whole State, he assumed that he was doing all that was required for his district. He was re-elected by a greatly increased plurality. The Republican plurality in the district for the electoral ticket was 1882; the plurality for Mr. Phelps, 2244—the largest that had ever been given in the district for any candidate.

Greatly exhausted mentally and physically by the ceaseless labor of the campaign, Mr. Phelps was so grieved over the result on the Presidency that he scarcely welcomed his own proud victory with joy. The attachment of Mr. Blaine and Mr. Phelps to each other was sincere and disinterested, but their political fortunes could hardly be otherwise than somewhat interwoven. There was nothing better understood in political circles during Mr. Blaine's candidacy for President than that, if successful, his faithful adherent of long standing from New Jersey would have the first place in the Cabinet. When the latter was at Bar Harbor, Mr. Blaine handed him a sealed envelope, telling him not to open it unless the writer, Mr. Blaine, should be elected President. There is no doubt that in this letter Mr. Phelps was told that he would be made Secretary of State. The letter was

of course returned to Mr. Blaine unopened, and if Mr. Phelps ever knew of its contents, the knowledge was never divulged.

In less than a month after the election, Mr. Phelps was in his seat at the opening of the second and short session of the Forty-eighth Congress. One of his first actions was the introduction of a joint resolution, providing that the Government take steps to enable the people and producers of the United States to be represented in the Exposition to be held at Antwerp, Belgium, in 1885. This resolution was favorably received and a bill giving the President ample power to appoint commissioners, and to use the national ships to convey exhibits to this Exposition, passed both houses.

In the prolonged discussion on the Inter-State Commerce Bill in January, Mr. Phelps and the author of the bill, Mr. Reagan of Texas, became engaged in a controversy of a personal character, which grew out of an attack upon the New Jersey Congressman relating to his investments in railroad-building years before in Texas. The latter, in his reply, attested the bad faith of the Texas legislature in repudiating its promises and obligations to Northern capitalists who had built railroads in Texas of incalculable value in developing the agricultural regions of that State. Mr. Phelps's well-known readiness in debate never served him better than in this encounter, where it enabled him to turn the tables upon his assailant and place him in a most awkward position, by proving that his extensive farm lands had been made immensely more valuable by the railroad that Mr. Phelps and his associate capitalists had built through them, for which Mr. Reagan paid nothing, while it cost the builders millions of dollars, without their ever having received a cent of the money promised as compensation.

Efficient support was given by Mr. Phelps to the efforts made at this session, which were successful, in finally settling the long-standing French Spoliation Claims. These

claims grew out of the hostilities between France and England during, or shortly after, our war of the Revolution, when French cruisers seized vessels manned by English-speaking sailors without any discrimination. The owners of American merchant vessels made a claim against France for damages aggregating $20,000,000. France presented an offset of $280,000,000 for our violation of certain treaty stipulations. In the settlement between the two countries the United States assumed the payment of the American ship-owners and merchants. Instead of promptly and honestly fulfilling its obligations, our Government for eighty years dodged the payment of the claims of its own citizens. The pending bill provided that all those alleged obligations should be referred to our Court of Claims, and if they were found just, there could be found no further decent or even possible excuse for not paying them. The opposition to the bill took the ground that as all the original claimants were dead, it was illegal and an unnecessary act of extravagance to pay their heirs and assignees anything at this late day. Mr. Phelps was next to the last to address the House in this long debate. In reviewing the case of the claimants he said:

This is certainly a piece of ancient history, but none the worse for its age, if it be a true piece. We are now at the end of the nineteenth century providing for the debts of the eighteenth. If they are just this delay is the strongest reason for our action; and that they are just I honestly believe, and to that conclusion public opinion has at last settled. Fortunately the origin of these claims is so simple that the obscurity of the past cannot becloud it.

. . .

They followed the different Congresses down the century and got what? Forty reports, of which thirty-eight were favorable and the other two decidedly unfavorable. They got committed in the reports which they prepared the greatest lawyers of the age—Webster, Clayton, Choate, Everett, Sumner, Cushing, each preparing one or more reports indorsing

the legality of the case. Their minds were too robust to find in the ingenious but minute objection of my young friend from Wisconsin any obstacle to bar.

But these waking claimants got no money. It is time now that they did; and our committee to-day are taking a first step, not a long one, in the direction of giving them some. We are sending their claims to the Court of Claims, that they may there be judicially examined and judicially stated. And when they come out in legal shape I hope, and I hope that the House wishes, that the moral claim which they will have to payment may be promptly recognized. There are but two substantial objections. They tell us the claims are stale and assigned. Mr. Speaker, will there ever be a private claim against this Government which will not be so delayed as to be stale? Will there ever be a number of citizens, owning claims, who will not in this delay be forced by their necessities to sell their rights? But delay when the Government only is at fault and assignment are no bars to legal claimants. And these claims have the rights of law, not the charities of equity.

The bill was passed and our government at last paid all the genuine claimants their honest dues.

In the consideration of the annual Post Office Appropriation Bill, one of the leading subjects that was under discussion was the amount that should be appropriated for compensating American steamships for carrying mails to foreign ports, which involved the question of building up the American marine through the aid of government subsidies. Mr. Phelps, in his Congressional career, from first to last was a strenuous advocate of liberal appropriations for this service. He addressed the House several times during this discussion, and gave a great deal of information relating to the policy of other governments in securing foreign trade by financial assistance to their mail-carrying vessels. In support of an amendment that he proposed to offer to increase the amount of the appropriation named in the bill for American mail steamships, he said:

This is surely not too much to expend for objects every way worthy, and especially dear at this time to the hearts of American people. It is to revive American commerce and to recreate the merchant marine of which our fathers were so proud. The sum is small compared with the vast sum spent by our rivals in this great enterprise. They give all their net revenue; more, they add to it all their treasuries will allow.

He then gave statistics of the amounts paid by the European governments, great and small, to their mail steamers, and the amount of trade that these nations had gained by this policy, while the amounts appropriated by us were insignificant in comparison and our foreign trade correspondingly small. He said in addition that non-manufacturing countries, like the South American states and the countries in the Far East, are the markets for which civilizations compete. We can secure them only by sending our flag and our mail bags. Trade never fails to follow the flag. It is the pioneer that opens the way, and when the way is open, American manufacturers will walk profitably in it. The Peninsula and Oriental Steamship Company of Great Britain has for years received millions of pounds from that government, in return for which it carried the flag of Great Britain to the East and brought hundreds of millions of dollars to British commerce. To sustain his views, Mr. Phelps arrayed facts and figures bearing upon the subject under discussion with skill and potency, and the correctness of his statements the anti-subsidy advocates made no attempt to dispute. It must be recalled to the memory that this was a House with a large Democratic majority, and that the general policy of that party was opposition to all subsidies. But by sheer persistency, importuning, and intellectual force, the friends of American ships and commerce did succeed in the very last hours of the session in squeezing out of this reluctant House a moderate appropriation for mail subsidies. A few hours later, a Democratic administration was installed in power for the first time since

the Civil War, and the Democratic Postmaster-General refused to devote this money to the use for which it was voted. In a speech at a mass meeting, during a subsequent Congress, in which the House was again Democratic, Mr. Phelps alluded to this incident when saying:

> England stands first in the commerce of the world, having given $240,000,000 to her commerce, and she now holds forty-two per cent. of the commerce of the world. She carries 15,000,000 tons of our merchandise. She is not alone in her belief in a generous policy. Germany has contributed $1,100,000 to her commerce, and France has followed in her tracks. We, to-day, need the business of South America, but we cannot get from the Democrats the grant of a single subsidy. We did get a gift of $800,000, and that at three o'clock in the morning after a great struggle, and then a Democratic Postmaster-General refused to use it.

Mrs. Phelps and Miss Phelps were at the Washington home during the session this year and all participated in the social life at the national capital, so the winter months passed pleasantly and quickly by.

After the inauguration of the new President, Mr. Cleveland, a trip to Florida was made by Mr. and Mrs. Phelps before returning to Teaneck.

Early in July Mr. Phelps went to California, stopping on the way to view with critical interest all the sights and wonders of the Rocky Mountain region. He spent July and August at the Villa that was then a noted hotel on the San Gabriel Mountains, near Pasadena. Senator and Mrs. Don Cameron were also guests at the hotel and afforded congenial companionship. Mr. Phelps wrote from there that he liked California; that his health was very much improved, and that he was pleased to know that he weighed one hundred and forty-six pounds in his "riding suit." In September he journeyed over most of the State of California, and as he was known personally or by reputation to many of the proprietors of the large estates, he

became by invitation their guest. From the Hotel Del Monte he wrote to his superintendent at Teaneck:

I was n't going to write to you at all, but Miss Marian says everything on the farm looks so well that it occurs to me that I should be ungrateful if I did n't send you a line. This climate is wonderful. They grow grapes, oranges, and figs, yet no one need ever suffer with cold or heat. It agrees wonderfully with me and I have gotten through the summer with less inconvenience than for a long time. I have visited the estates of these great millionaires. They spend ten thousand to our one thousand. But from the lack of good taste, their results are not so satisfactory as ours, always excepting that they pay extravagantly to get water, and I am inclined to think that there they are wise.

Ending his stay in California, he visited Oregon, and returned to New Jersey to begin work in the fall campaign in that State. He made speeches in several of the principal cities and was gratified that the election resulted in a Republican majority in both branches of the legislature.

CHAPTER XVI

Elected to Forty-ninth Congress by Increased Plurality—First Efforts to Raise Embargo on American Pork in Europe—Arbitration in Labor Troubles—American Mail Steamship Appropriation—Favors Indemnity for Outrage on Chinese—Oleomargarine Campaign—He Champions the Cause of the Dairy Farmers—Declines to Become Candidate for Governor of New Jersey

WHEN the roll was called in the House at the first meeting of the Forty-ninth Congress, December 7, 1885, Mr. Phelps answered to his name. The House was again Democratic, but by a less majority than of the last Congress. The Representative from the Fifth District of New Jersey was reappointed to his old committees and again named as one of the Regents of the Smithsonian Institute. At the beginning of the session there was an animated and prolonged debate over the revision of the rules. In the debates, Mr. Phelps earnestly advocated proposed amendments which would give the leading committees less latitude in forcing legislation and leaving more power to the House itself.

He offered at this session a resolution relating to the restrictions imposed by the authorities of certain European countries upon the importation into those countries of American pork. Later he presented a memorial from the State Board of Agriculture of New Jersey upon this subject, which he accompanied with a resolution that the Secretary of State be "requested to transmit copies of all correspondence between his Department and the representatives of France, Germany, Austria, and any other European country which has partially or entirely restricted

the importation of American pork, referring to the facts of such exclusion or restriction and the reasons therefor."

The resolution was adopted, and this was the first action of a practical nature made in our Congress to do away with the exclusion of American pork from European countries, a movement in which Mr. Phelps a few years later took such a notable part.

Another measure to which he gave aid was the Arbitration Bill, which was designed to promote the speedy settlement of controversies and difficulties between common carriers engaged in inter-State commerce and transportation and their employees. This would affect nearly all the railroad employees in the country. While speaking on the bill, he said:

I have no fear that the working men of this country will not get all their rights. It is only a question of time and manner; and, for my part, I do not dread the result, but I do dread the processes, and I would do what I could to make these more orderly and more efficient.

The working man will get the rights that he lacks, just as he got those he has, by public opinion. He will attract, persuade, and convince the public. But the processes by which he gets his rights are naturally more or less wasteful, disorderly, and turbulent, because he gets his rights by proving his wrongs. He uses every effort to get public attention for, public sympathy with, and public recognition and conviction of his wrongs. As soon as he convinces the public of his wrongs the public gives him his rights so promptly, so fully, that he does not need court or Legislature. Society awards them in a flash.

Is not this the splendid record of labor's achievement in the past? Why shall it not be the experience of the future? When the workman, anxious to obtain a right, starts to convince the public he moves with the zeal of long repression. His success at first is too great. He masses and exhibits his wrongs in such shape of enormity and number that he himself is surprised and indignant, while unfortunately the public is made only more incredulous. So the spectacle which makes

the working man most impatient for action and redress makes the people slower and more reluctant to give it. Hence friction. This is the dangerous stage of the process. This is the stage we should unite all our efforts to eliminate, to shorten, at least to modify in its extremest manifestations. And this we can do only by suggesting or providing the way and means by which the working man can more quickly prove his wrongs. Methods are needed by which he can quickly, clearly, and conspicuously make his case and discover and publish its merits. This is the stage where this bill enters and this is its method. It provides a method by which the working man may more quickly prove and advertise his wrongs.

When the Post-Office Appropriation Bill was being discussed, Mr. Phelps renewed the efforts he made at the previous session for liberal appropriations for American mail-carrying steamships, and he made sharp attacks upon the enemies of American shipping. His power in this long debate was very sensibly felt. When these discussions were pending, he had occasion to say:

I am one of those who voted in the last Congress to authorize the Postmaster-General to give $400,000 to American vessels for carrying the foreign mails. It was not much compared with the millions that England, France, and Germany gave, but it was a step in the right direction, so it was a gain. It inaugurated a new policy. It accomplished two purposes dear to the American heart: It fostered American manufacturers by getting them their share in the new markets of the world; and American shipping, by giving it protection against foreign competition. So we were glad to vote for it; the gladder, because it was about the only opportunity that Congress, with eighty Democratic majority, gave us to vote for anything the people wanted. And what good came of it all? English ships still carry our mails; English sailors still get our money. Why? Did the President veto the measure? Was the Treasury unable to furnish the money? No. One of his Secretaries repealed the provision. He pitied a Congress which could not see the force of objections four times rehearsed to them,

corrected their judgment, and overruled their decisions. And we are, alas! without consolation or redress. . . . I know well enough that the friends of American industry on the sea and land are, by reason of an ecclesiastical blunder for which they are not to blame, made powerless to do anything except protest, and I only rise up to protest in their name against this irregular veto, which is as insulting to the dignity of Congress as it is harmful to the business of the American people.

On another date in the discussion he went into an able illustration, quoting facts and figures to show how vastly the trade and commerce of other nations had been benefitted at our expense, through their policy of fostering their steamship lines. He showed that the prices paid to our steamship companies for carrying the mails were much lower for the same amount of service than were paid by any other nation. He then supplemented his arguments by saying:

This measure has so many advantages, it supplies so many wants, we ought promptly to adopt it. We want steamships; this measure will give them. We want markets for our surplus; this measure will give them. We want to defend our coasts; this measure will give us a merchant marine — the militia of the sea. Why should we refuse to pass a measure so useful and so reasonable because its enemies call it a subsidy? It is not a subsidy, for it is neither a gift nor an excessive payment. It is a fair payment to American ships for carrying the mails, to secure the foreign trade, and the foreign markets that we want and need.

When the River and Harbor Bill was about to be voted upon and the Representative from the Newark district in New Jersey was struggling to increase the insufficient amount named in the bill for improving the Passaic River, Mr. Phelps went to his assistance, and his influence with the House helped to increase the needed appropriation. As usual, he had solid facts and figures at his ready command, and he gave the House some weighty reasons why

New Jersey's most important water-way should be treated more justly than was proposed. In his argument he said:

The city of Newark has 150,000 inhabitants, all at work except those who are in the cradle or the grave. There are fourteen hundred large factories, and in them or about them labor forty thousand workmen every day. Most of them may be Knights of Labor. If they are, I hope they are watching the votes of Representatives here to-day. This hive of industry gives to commerce every year seventy million dollars' worth of a varied industry. But this vast trade and commerce call for better accommodations. Newark lies on the banks of the Passaic, three or four miles from Newark Bay. The river is broad, but its channel is narrow. Up and down this river passed last year twenty-two thousand vessels. They have to pass each other painfully and slowly, as in a canal. A canal may be picturesque, but it is not fitted for a business like this. The Chief Engineer proposes to make it a practicable water-way. He says for $125,000 he will make it two hundred feet wide and ten feet deep. It ought to be done. This committee ought to vote the appropriation. I ask it not for this State or this city only. I ask it for a general commerce.

President Cleveland, in March, sent a message to Congress in which he called attention to the outrages perpetrated by a mob upon peaceful Chinese living in what was then the Territory of Wyoming. In our treaty with China, the United States were under obligations to indemnify the victims of such acts of violence. A bill for this purpose was before the House. Under the rule, there were but ten minutes allowed to each speaker. In this time, Mr. Phelps made one of the most potent and statesmanlike of all his speeches in Congress. In referring to the victims of this outbreak, he remarked:

Their houses were burned; their goods pillaged; twenty-eight of them were killed and fifteen wounded. The only provocation was that they would not join in a strike. We should pay for the property destroyed, not for charity's sake,

but for the solid reason that it is an international obligation and a single reciprocity for a hundred cases where China has paid an indemnity to us in cases less monstrous than this.

The history of our diplomatic relations with China for nearly fifty years has been only the history of prompt and greedy claims for indemnity on our part and of prompt and generous payment on its part. It has paid for the rights of every American citizen, when violated. It has paid for the violated rights of Chinese subjects when they were connected with ours; as when they paid a Chinese landlord, whose house was destroyed by a mob, because an American leased it, and as when they paid for the property and clothing of native helpers, which were lost in the service of American missionaries. This is the way China paid indemnities up to 1858. In this fashion she paid them in detail, then she paid them in gross. She took more than $700,000, gave it to the United States Government and said, "Take this and pay your countrymen." We took it, we paid all claims generously, with twelve per cent. interest; but the generosity of China was so ample that after all this we had left nearly one third of the original sum to return to China. China did this and shamed the grudging spirit in which Christian countries pay their international bills.

The speaker then discussed our legal liability in this case, urging the House to take this opportunity to show our disposition to keep good faith under the solemn obligations of treaties with foreign powers.

The bill was not passed at this session, but at the session following Congress voted an ample sum in reparation for this territorial lawlessness.

This session of Congress was a very long one, extending into August, and the work of the active members was unusually heavy. Mr. Phelps had introduced and passed a large number of meritorious private bills, and was instrumental in pushing through several important measures, not perhaps of national interest, but for the benefit of different localities in New Jersey. He made frequent arguments before the House in furtherance of

measures of interest to his own and other constituencies of his State. He took especial interest in promoting legislation for the establishment of government powder works near Dover, N. J.; the building of a railroad and passenger bridge over Arthur's Kill to connect New Jersey with Staten Island, and for the protection of fisheries on the coast of New Jersey.

One of the questions of the greatest consequence which occupied the attention of the House this session was that of the tariff. The Democratic majority of the House was intent upon the reduction of the tariff then existing to a point that would be injurious to all American manufacturers, and ruinous to several of the special industries of New Jersey. Mr. Morrison, who had succeeded Mr. Randall as chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, and was therefore the leader of the majority, concentrated at last all the efforts of his party for the reduction of import duties upon what was called a horizontal bill, which enlarged the free list and provided for a cut of twenty-five per cent. indiscriminately upon all articles left on the tariff schedule. The struggle over this measure was a determined and vigorous one on each side. The energies of the Republican leaders were taxed to their utmost to maintain a protective system under which the industries of the nation were flourishing, and labor was remunerative. When the vote was taken, the Morrison bill was defeated by a very close shave. It would have been carried only for the support of thirty-five protectionist Democrats under the leadership of Samuel J. Randall. As an evidence of the temper of the Democratic party on this subject, out of the thirty-five followers of Mr. Randall on this vote, only ten were returned to the succeeding Congress.

The dairy farmers all over the country now took action to have a law made that would prevent the sale of oleomargarine as butter. So great a public interest had been aroused by the contest in Congress on this question in

the winter and spring of 1886 that it was referred to as the "oleomargarine campaign." The dairy and butter-making interests in some parts of New Jersey were very important, and the representation from that State in both branches of the national legislature was alive to them. Mr. Phelps, when the subject was introduced, appeared before the Committee on Agriculture in behalf of the New Jersey farmers, and after some delay, a bill satisfactory to the farming and dairy interests was reported to the House, and before the close of the session, but after strong opposition, it became a law.

A letter was sent to Mr. Phelps, signed by the President of the American Agricultural and Dairy Association, which thanked him in the name of the organization for his support of the bill and said that he had rendered the dairy farmers of America an inestimable service by his well directed efforts and arduous labors in behalf of the measure. It continues:

> You are entitled to their lasting gratitude. The passage of the bill is of the utmost importance to them, and they are delighted to know that they have representatives in Congress such as yourself, who appreciate their necessities and have a lively concern for their interest and the interest of the country at large. I hope that the farmers of America will see that they are represented in Congress by such men as yourself, regardless of politics. I express not only my sentiments, but those of the butter and cheese trade of New York and other cities, besides 5,000,000 of dairy farmers.

When portraying the abilities and standing of the individual members of this House, the Washington correspondent of the Chicago *Journal* wrote: "A careful observer and a member who has been here a long time says that not one in ten of the members are listened to when they speak. He intimates that about seven members of each party direct the whole business." In noting this *Harper's Weekly* gave five of those on the

Republican side as: Reed, Hiscock, McKinley, Phelps, and Long.

In personal allusions to the House at this date, the Philadelphia *Bulletin* published this:

> In this Congress Mr. Phelps spoke frequently and with marked success. The Right Honorable Mr. Forster, the old Cabinet friend of Mr. Gladstone, whose recent death was so much deplored, spent some weeks at this time in Washington for the purpose of studying American parliamentary debate. He stated subsequently to Mr. Morton, late minister to France, that in neither House of Congress had he heard any one speak with so much effect as Mr. Phelps.

In the winter of 1886, the House of Assembly of the State of New Jersey, accompanied by its Speaker and other officers and several State officials, paid a visit to Washington. They were handsomely entertained by Mr. Phelps and he gave them a reception at his home which afforded an opportunity to the Jersey legislators to meet well-known Senators and Representatives and distinguished officials and personages who were invited to be present.

As Congress was drawing to a close in the last days of July, Mr. Phelps started across the water for a few weeks' stay at Carlsbad, a place always beneficial to his health.

The long session of the House of 1886 made such a demand upon the energies of Mr. Phelps that he found it impossible, except in a few instances, to accept the many requests made of him to deliver addresses here and there and upon a great variety of subjects. But he found time to make a pleasing speech at a great Irish Liberty meeting held in Washington to encourage the Home Rule cause in Ireland, that was then advocated by Mr. Gladstone. He took the view that when a Prime Minister of England arose in Parliament to offer a bill to do justice to Ireland, it was evident that the world's public opinion was

influencing the noblest and best in England to help redress the wrongs of centuries, and that this would continue until it finally compelled the granting of local self-government and independence to the Irish people.

Invited by the Grand Army of the Republic, Mr. Phelps delivered an oration on Memorial Day before a large gathering of people at Mt. Holly, New Jersey. It was an address that was widely quoted. After treating upon the topics immediately suggested by the occasion, he declared that peace had its dangers no less than war, and that the soldiers of the Grand Army should be ready to meet them. He mentioned one of these dangers to be a neglect of political duties by a class of good men, because of a fear of being called politicians. He declared it to be the duty of every man to do political work for the community in which he and his family live, and also for the whole country if need be:

> The men who made and signed the Declaration of Independence, and afterward framed our Constitution, were farmers, doctors, clergymen, and lawyers—men working with brain or hand—and so representatives of the toiling millions for whom our government is formed—made politics a study and a duty, and we cannot do better than to follow their example. Any other course involves disaster to the public weal.

He had some good words to say for Congress in contradiction of the thoughtless and flippant criticisms so often published, that Congress holds unnecessarily long sessions, prolix and tedious debates, and works too slowly. He contended that Congressional debates were not time wasted. That Congress confers other benefits upon the land besides making laws. Its discussions educate the press and the people on public questions, and no debate is fruitless, no matter what its termination may be. He said:

> Our country is large, our people many, our interests diversified and often conflicting; and it takes time to consider and

ascertain the middle ground, where justice dwells, and decide what is for the greatest good of the greatest number.

He referred to the fear that often exists that accumulated wealth is a danger to the government. From this source can be seen no serious danger:

Inequalities of fortune must exist until all men are created with the same tastes and capacities; they are evils which the ballot cannot cure. Destroy our present form of government, and change our present society, and the same inequalities would reappear in any structure built upon the ruins. They cannot be cured—they can be mitigated. Education will do the most toward it, and virtue and philanthropy—teaching the rich the duty of shaping their lives to the spirit of the Golden Rule, and teaching the poor the great truth that happiness, self-respect, and the respect of others may exist without money. The world, by education and experience, will yet learn the undoubted truth that Agur prayed for the best; and that the estate within the grasp of every one of our countrymen, that midway between riches and poverty, is the happiest of all conditions.

In conclusion he paid a fine tribute to the Grand Army of the Republic, and praised them for the care they take to see that none of their comrades suffer. Cicero said: "The men who serve a nation are as worthy of honor as those who founded it," and this nation as long as it lives will do honor to the soldiers who saved it.

The regard which the New Jersey orator had for those who fought to save the Union was not exhibited wholly in words. General John A. Logan, the gallant soldier and able statesman, died this year, while representing Illinois in the national Senate. He had given years to the service of his country and little time to acquiring wealth. His friends began an effort to raise a memorial fund to be given to Mrs. Logan. Mr. Phelps went to their aid immediately with a subscription of $1000, and was instrumental in having others of his acquaintance

contribute until the fund reached the generous sum of $64,000.

Before Mr. Phelps went to Europe, the Republican leaders in New Jersey, who voiced the party sentiments, were desirous that he should be a candidate for governor of the State. They believed that with a standard-bearer of his reputation and popularity, the long-time Democratic majority of the State could be overcome. Mr. Phelps turned a deaf ear to all this solicitation. At no time did he have any aspiration for the governorship. He did not think his strength adequate to the exacting duties of that office. When he returned in September, and on the eve of the State convention, the nomination for governor was undoubtedly at his command, but he could not be moved from his first determination. He went to the convention, and furthered the nomination of his associate in the House of Representatives, Benjamin F. Howey. He was selected for permanent chairman of the convention and one of the newspaper reports thus describes the scene:

> A committee was appointed to escort Mr. Phelps to the platform, and he was greeted with the most enthusiastic applause. For a few minutes the Convention was a perfect pandemonium, and the delegates after tiring of using their hands and feet in applauding, wound up with three cheers for the Chairman. It was a magnificent ovation to Mr. Phelps and indicated in a marked manner his popularity and strength in the State. He made one of the most felicitous speeches ever delivered on a like occasion, and the wit and humor with which his remarks were interspersed kept his auditors in a manifestly happy humor. Mr. Phelps was frequently interrupted by applause. One old gentleman remarked to us that Mr. Phelps was not a very large man, but he was a splendid speaker. He said: "I could listen to him all day."

Mr. Howey was nominated and his friend from the Fifth Congressional District took an active interest in his

campaign, speaking in behalf of Mr. Howey frequently both in and out of his own district.

While Mr. Phelps was abroad, the delegates to the Congressional convention in his district had been elected. No other man was thought of as a candidate, and no other was named in the convention, which was held in Paterson, and was a combination of nominating convention, ovation, and jubilee. The nominee addressed the convention, and his first words were these:

I shall not attempt to conceal, gentlemen, the satisfaction I feel in this hearty greeting. For nearly twenty years I have thought a great deal of this district, and I am naturally much pleased when I see any sign that the district thinks something of me. Nominated five times for Congress, though rotation is the rule and the custom in it, and receiving this fifth nomination, as I have done to-day, with absolute unanimity and without solicitation or effort or care on my part, and even without my presence in the country during the preparations for it, I cannot but feel it a matter of honorable pride, and I know that it will be a fresh spur to my efforts to advance its interests. . . . You put me in office almost in my boyhood. You have had patience with all my shortcomings and your confidence in me continues. It is nearly twenty years since, over in the old Opera House, I first spoke to the people of this district of the principles which would control my political course. I have rehearsed them often enough since. I do not know that I have changed one of them, and if to-day I take a few minutes of your time to recapitulate them it is because these principles are the principles of the Republican party and constitute a creed with which we cannot be too familiar.

At the election the Republican candidate for Congress swept the district as he had never done before, leading his Democratic opponent in each of the counties, and with a total plurality of 2836.

In December the post of the Grand Army of the Republic located at Westwood, Bergen County, went to

Washington to place a marble tablet over the grave in Arlington Cemetery of their venerated brigade-commander in the War of the Rebellion, General Gabriel R. Paul. Congressman Phelps, who was already in Washington, was called upon to deliver the address at the ceremonial. There was a gathering of prominent Jerseymen, and Mr. Phelps spoke under the trees and in the snow, briefly but feelingly and eloquently. The veterans went back to their homes pleased with the attentions they had received, and with the success of their noble undertaking.

Two weeks later, December 22d, at the annual dinner of the New England Society in New York, he was one of the invited speakers, and the toast to which he responded was "Our Congress." Here he again took the opportunity to speak favorably of the merits of Congress and in commendation of the ability and honesty of his fellow-legislators.

CHAPTER XVII

New Year's Reception at Teaneck Grange—Description of the Grand and Famous Mansion—The Art Gallery—Mr. Phelps's Marked Social Characteristics—A Most Pleasing Host—Unique Banquet to U. S. Senator Hiscock—Writes a Noted Biography of Garfield—Helps to Secure Sea Girt to the State—His Political Prominence in New Jersey—Friends Put forth His Claims for U. S. Senate—Speaks to the Manufacturing Jewellers' Association

AT the close of the year 1886, Mr. Phelps found that the quaint old Dutch farmhouse that he had first chosen for his New Jersey home, through making additions for many years under the supervision of a skilful architect, had at last been transformed to his liking and stood a completed residence. The last addition—the large picture-gallery, which also was to be used as a dancing hall—had been finished and all the pictures hung. He thought, therefore, that on January 1, 1887, there should be something more than his ordinary New Year's reception—an open house in its fullest sense, to mark the event. His friends far and near were invited, and it was understood that all Jerseymen would be heartily welcome. The consequence was that it became a day made memorable for many of his Bergen County neighbors, as well as for political guests and prominent personages and officials from more remote parts of the State, who mingled in a joyous throng that overflowed the extensive apartments, partook of his hospitality, and joined in praise of all they saw and admired.

The mansion was especially noticeable and attractive because of its dissimilarity to the prevailing architecture

of the locality; it was original in design and arrangement, with distinctive features, but its exterior lines gave no adequate hint of the elegance and taste reigning within. Its length was about three hundred and fifty feet, with a width varying from twenty-five to fifty feet, and one or two stories in height. The room forming the north end was the combined office, workshop, and private retreat of Mr. Phelps. It occupied the width of the building, with high wooden ceiling. A fireplace in which a tall man could stand erect received great logs of wood that blazed and crackled on massive andirons, filling the place with generous warmth and peaceful glow. From the centre of the room a staircase extended to a bedroom above, where Mr. Phelps frequently retired after a long night's work without disturbing the family. Built in the head-board of the bed was a wooden pillow used by Mr. Phelps's great-grandfather, Captain David Phelps, in the Revolutionary War. This apartment was a platform rather than a room, as it was merely surrounded with a railing and not partitioned off. From the bed nearly the whole room below was in view and the moving shadows cast by the blazing logs were a soothing charm to the wearied toiler. This private combination-room, although furnished with extreme modesty, was one of the most interesting to visitors because it was so characteristic of the man whose personality was impressed upon every detail of its arrangement.

Next came the library, an oblong low-ceilinged room the width of the house, with another large fireplace, faced by a fine-meshed brass fender. The ceiling was finished in oak. On three sides the walls were hidden by bookcases holding one of the most complete private libraries in the State, books on every subject of value to the scholar and the statesman, and comprising the working tools of the master mind.

Ascending two steps the hall of the old farmhouse was entered. It ran from east to west, with a broad staircase

reaching to the second floor. Then came the richly furnished parlor, on the east side of which ran a corridor south to the large dining-room, an apartment with light on three sides, including a great bay-window that served as a breakfast-room. Here some of the rare views for which Teaneck Grange was so often praised by visitors stretched across the broad lawns through tree clumps, coppice, or shrubbery. Sleeping-rooms and a music-room connected with the dining-room. From the music-room a second staircase led to the extension, and from the upper landing another flight of stairs descended to the grand picture-gallery, the glory of the house.

The upper floor of the extension was devoted to sleeping apartments, each furnished in different style and all entered from a corridor on the western side. In the basement was the billiard-room, kitchen, servants' apartments, and laundry.

The picture-gallery was at the southwestern extremity of the building, and was built of stone. Its high walls were covered with pictures chiefly by modern artists of celebrity and recognized merit. One of the most generally admired of these was "Damascus," by Church, a companion to which was a bold landscape of mountain and lake with three hunters in the foreground. Another picture, by an unknown artist, fascinated all who visited the gallery. It was the head and bust of a young Venetian girl reclining on a pillow, with face of marvellous color and expression, and eyes that seemed to follow the observer about the room. A stage-coach race, and a Russian officer attacked by robbers while driving across the plains, were examples of spirited animation on canvas of which there were several. Conspicuous on the east wall was a fine full-length portrait of James G. Blaine, which was one of Mr. Phelps's most highly prized pictures. On the south wall, an old Dutch garden, with its rich-colored flowering plants, won much praise. At the opposite end of the gallery, to the left of the staircase on

entering, was a painting that had an admirer in nearly every person who saw it. It illustrated a scene in one of John Hay's poems, representing Jim Bludsoe, pilot of the Mississippi River steamboat *Prairie Belle*, with his hands on the wheel, crying through the smoke and flame that enveloped and was consuming him: "I 'll hold her nozzle ag'in the bank 'till the last galoot's ashore." The realism of the subject appealed strongly to all visitors.

Perhaps the most conspicuously noted picture in the house, however, was a full-length portrait of James A. Garfield, companion to that of Mr. Blaine. It was hung in the front hall, near the foot of the staircase leading from the art gallery. It was the last picture ever taken of Mr. Garfield, and was in his room at Elberon until after his death, when it was presented to Mr. Phelps by Mrs. Garfield.

The gallery was but the formal display of art works in the Teaneck home. Rare etchings, engravings, water-colors, oil paintings, tapestries, mosaics, carvings, bronzes, and other gems adorned the rooms and halls, while the floors were covered with fine rugs from many marts. All of the apartments of the house revealed that it was the cherished home of an extensive traveller, and one of means, for its owner was ever bringing to Teaneck curious and beautiful objects collected during his wanderings.

It was under such conditions, with his home representing the fruition of a dream of nearly two decades, that Mr. Phelps surrounded himself with neighbors, his most staunch and loyal supporters, and made merry all the New Year's day and evening. The threatening weather of the morning was succeeded by a clear and starlit sky, and for hours the crisp air carried the sounds of happy voices as the guests drove away to homes on hillside and in valley. Teaneck Grange was the scene of numerous gatherings, and many men and women of national repute were entertained within its hospitable walls; but no as-

semblage ever gave more genuine pleasure to host and hostess than that which marked the opening of the completed home.

In size and general equipment this was the most commodious residence in Northern New Jersey at the period. It was furnished with every convenience for comfort and promptness in service. Through frequent entertainment of distinguished people, and the somewhat elaborate social functions inseparable from the private and public life of a family whose head was associated with national and international affairs of state, Teaneck Grange attained a repute that soon constituted it one of the show-places of the land. Many strangers visited and admired it, captivated by the minarets, tall chimneys, corners, and swells that constituted the exterior, the central figure in a beautiful picture, and were charmed by the interior with its rich adornment of furniture, art, and curios.

The large carriage house and stables, built to conform to the architecture of the residence, formed a near-by group of buildings that added to the picture viewed from a short distance, and presented an imposing aspect.

The scene on the first day of January, 1887, was but typical of life at Teaneck whenever the master or the mistress was at home. It was said of Mr. Phelps, and repeated by many who knew him, that he had a "talent for friendships." He never desired loneliness anywhere. He was fond of entertaining visitors, and especially liked the company of bright men and women at his table, where in originality and genial humor he was unsurpassed as a conversationalist. He had an obvious and quiet enjoyment in all the oddities and drollnesses of life. Still, when dwelling upon events in the lives of others, he did not lack sympathy for all that was serious or tender. Surrounded by guests, with a half mischievous, but always merry twinkle in his eyes, he enjoyed directing the conversation so as to bring out the various phases in the characters of those present, to contrast them and

mentally compare the impressions that the words and acts of each made upon the others.

No one could excel him in his faculty of making all visitors at ease, and he was pleased and his enthusiasm aroused when they showed a desire to see what marvellous developments had been made on this great estate of so many acres and its surroundings. He never counted the moments lost that he spent in pointing out to visitors the pleasant places of his fair domain, and when the sight-seers were willing, he preferred, rather than riding, to walk with them over the clean earth, the sweetness of which was always grateful to his senses.

This was the Phelps home at Teaneck in the fulness of its majesty. What a crowd of journalists and literary figures, men of affairs and men of state, and political battlers—the greatest and the humblest—thronged to this shrine in the days of its plenitude and power!

In the short session of the Forty-ninth Congress, which occupied the winter of 1887, Mr. Phelps took his usual active part in the work and the debates. He spoke earnestly for the bill promoting and encouraging reciprocal commercial relations with Mexico, Brazil, and the South American republics. With voice and influence he was foremost in the enactment of legislation which authorized the President to protest and defend the rights of American fishing, trading, and other vessels, which was known as the "Fisheries Retaliation Bill."

Congress ended in March and shortly before its close a dinner was given by Mr. Phelps in honor of his close friend, Representative Frank Hiscock, who had just been elected to the United States Senate by the legislature of New York. This entertainment was noticeably unique on account of the different characteristics and opposing political doctrines conspicuously held by those who were invited. But all were most genial and harmonious on this pleasant occasion. A special Washington dispatch published next day in all daily papers of the land said of it:

Mr. William Walter Phelps's dinner to Senator-elect Frank Hiscock at Chamberlain's to-night brought together one of the most remarkable assemblages that have ever sat down to the same table in Washington. All parties, all factions, and nearly all professions were represented. Sir Lionel Sackville West was there at the right of the host, representing England. Mr. Watterson, who has said almost as many sharp things about the English aristocracy as he has about Mr. Randall, was beside him. Mr. Randall himself was just over the way as pleasant as if he never had read any of Mr. Watterson's editorials, while around the table a little farther was Mr. Morrison, evidently forgetful of the fact that he had used the strongest language in the Democratic vocabulary to express his determination that the new tariff bill should not go through. Secretary Lamar was there, entirely regardless of what other gentlemen at the table had said of his Interior Department, and Secretary Whitney also, with no visible grudge against Mr. Reed for his filibustering defeat of his cherished plan for reorganizing the naval department.

Nobody but Mr. Phelps could have brought such a party together, and it is hardly going too far to say that nobody but Mr. Phelps could have kept their good humor continuous. In order to avoid any questions of precedence he had seated them around a circular table which made it difficult to distinguish the head from the foot. As host he sat farthest from the doorway and had the guests of the evening directly opposite. Between them the other guests were arranged in this way: On the right of Mr. Phelps Sir Lionel Sackville West, Henry Watterson, Senator Platt, Senator Evarts, Mr. Morrison, Senator Sewell, Hon. Levi P. Morton, Murat Halstead, Chauncey Depew, and Secretary Lamar. On the left Speaker Carlisle, Whitelaw Reid, Samuel J. Randall, Justice Blatchford, General Phil Sheridan, Major McKinley, Mr. W. W. Astor, Thomas B. Reed, Secretary Whitney, and John Sherman.

The speaking was not formal. Mr. Phelps proposed the only toast of the evening to the health of the Senator-elect, and Mr. Hiscock made the only formal response. After that the speeches followed pretty rapidly and each either made

part of the brilliant after-dinner talk that such an assemblage could produce or else alternated with it.

The most of the summer of this year Mr. Phelps was in enjoyment of the attractions and comforts of his home and revelled in literary pleasures. It was during these weeks that he wrote for Appleton's *Encyclopedia of American Biography* a sketch of the life of James A. Garfield. In a review of this volume of the Biography in a journal of high standing, this was said:

> Mr. Phelps's "Garfield" is a model which cyclopedia writers might well study. It is full without prolixity, animated without rhetorical flourish, concise without dryness, and abounding in evidences of an exceptional familiarity with the subject, which, however, never betrays the author into extravagant opinions. His account of General Garfield's military and political career is equally striking in both chapters; and he deals with the controversies which preceded and followed the presidential election with entire frankness. In technical workmanship the article is one of the best in the book.

In August the State of New Jersey was in danger of losing its fine camp-ground at Sea Girt, because the owner raised his price to the extent of $20,000 more than the legislature had appropriated. Mr. Phelps gave $5000 to supply the deficiency; others made up the remainder, and New Jersey secured one of the largest and best situated camp-grounds in the country.

At this time the Congressman from the Fifth District held the highest place among the political leaders of New Jersey. His office in New York was a Mecca for the politicians of the State, who went there for consultation, information, and advice. The State Senators to be elected in 1887 would have a vote in the election for United States Senator in January, 1889. It was the urgent demand of the party managers that Mr. Phelps should permit himself to be announced as an aspirant for

that office, they believing that if he would speak in the counties that were to elect Senators, a great gain would be made for the Republicans in the legislature. Mr. Phelps was becoming a little weary of the House and at that time a seat in the United States Senate would doubtless have been acceptable to him. The Republican majority in that body was a small one and its continuance uncertain. It became, therefore, important to gain a seat from New Jersey. Mr. Phelps yielded to the general desire of his fellow-partisans. He entered into the work energetically with body and soul, as he always did when he assumed any undertaking. He accepted appointments for speeches in all the pivotal counties and important centres. "Phelps Will Speak," naming the different places, was a displayed heading constantly in the newspapers. He delivered addresses without number at charity fairs, county fairs, soldiers' reunions, local conventions, and mass meetings. He was never wrought up to a higher pitch for political talk and work, and his activity aroused the ire of the Democratic journals, which declared that his utterances were "piquant and rampant," and that he was putting unwonted life into the campaign. He gave his critics additional cause for resentment by inspiring his hearers with predictions of a splendid Republican victory in the presidential election of the next year, and these prophecies were fulfilled. His efforts had a most marked effect, particularly in Democratic counties, in every one of which, where he made speeches, the Republican candidate for Senator was elected. The New York *Sun*, in those years Democratic, commenting on the result of this election, said:

> We invite the attention of all who may be interested to the results of the quiet but very thorough canvass made in New Jersey a few weeks ago under the able leadership of Mr. William Walter Phelps.
>
> There was no State ticket to be elected. The voting was only for legislators; and the special interest which Mr. Phelps

and his friends felt in the result is partly explained by the fact that Mr. McPherson's term as United States Senator ends one year from next March, and partly by the fact that there is to be a presidential election in November of next year. The full official returns of last month's election in New Jersey are now at hand. They show what a Protectionist Republican leader can do in that State when he gives his mind to the work. They are therefore full of interest to Democrats, particularly just now. On the total vote for Assemblymen, the Protectionist Republicans, under Mr. Phelps's leadership, carried New Jersey by a plurality of 2,619 over the Democratic candidates.

Mr. Phelps now thought that he had talked enough for that year. But the Manufacturing Jewellers' Association of New York gave a great dinner on December 1st, at which Chauncey M. Depew, Abram S. Hewitt, and General Sherman were to be among the orators. The managers insisted that Mr. Phelps should go and talk to them on the subject of "The American Union: Its Relations to, and Influence on the Nations of the World." He complied with their request and in his address pointed out several of the many instances, and some of them surprising, in which France, Germany, and other governments of Europe have profited by the example set before them by our form of government and our Federal Union.

CHAPTER XVIII

A Member of the Fiftieth Congress—Takes an Active Part in the Debates —Opposes the Mills Tariff Bill—Able Defence of the Industrial Interests of the Country—Advocates a Fractional Paper Currency—Sharp Criticism of the Democratic Administration for Abandoning the Cause of American Fisheries—Aids a Political Opponent—State of New Jersey Presents Statues of Richard Stockton and General Philip Kearny to Congress — Mr. Phelps Makes an Eloquent Presentation Speech — His Views on Paternalism

THE first session of the Fiftieth Congress was one of the longest in the history of the country. It continued from December 7, 1887, to October 20, 1888. The Democrats were again the ruling power, but their majority was a small one. Mr. Carlisle was once more Speaker. Mr. Phelps retained his position on his old Committee on Foreign Affairs, and was appointed for the third time to the Regency of the Smithsonian Institution.

Mr. Morrison, of Illinois, the Democratic leader of the last House, was not a member of this Congress, and the chairmanship of the Ways and Means Committee was given to Mr. Mills of Texas, who therefore became the majority leader.

The most sagacious of the Democratic leaders in the country now realized that the preponderancy of their party in Congress was gradually slipping away and that Mr. Cleveland's administration was drawing to an end without any practical legislation to carry out the Democratic doctrine of what was called "tariff reform." It was consequently demanded of the Democrats in Congress that they should use their utmost endeavors at this

session to reduce the duty on imports. The measure that was reported for this purpose by the Ways and Means Committee has gone into history notoriously as the "Mills Bill," and the struggle for its passage lasted until it was nearly time for the next session to meet.

The Republicans in the House were put on their mettle in this contest, for they had but little aid this time from the Democratic side. Mr. Randall's little band of Protectionist Democrats were now less than a dozen, and the great Democratic Commoner and party leader was absent from the House much of the time on account of ill health, for the shadow of death had begun its near approach.

All of the manufacturing industries of Mr. Phelps's district would be injuriously affected by the pending bill and to several of them its passage would mean utter ruin. He fought the bill with the greatest energy. The Democrats had voted down with stolid solidity every amendment not approved by their caucus. This aroused Mr. Phelps's indignation and called forth his first speech, in which he began by saying:

> I do not know, Mr. Chairman, that it is worth while to say anything. I cannot help thinking that whatever the fact and whatever the argument, it will be of no avail, and I cannot help feeling that I speak to a court that has already made its decision. How can I feel otherwise when I recall the facts? The Committee on Ways and Means refused to let any laborer or manufacturer tell them about the facts, refused to let any Representative make to them any argument, and then withdrew into the dark, privately, to prepare the Mills Bill, a code of decisions, which, like the laws of the Medes and the Persians, altereth not. This was the first step in their great drama, which, if it is successfully carried to the end, will be a tragedy to the interests of American industries.

He then proceeded to show the fallacies and danger of the measure under discussion, which, if adopted, would throw thousands of his wage-working constituents out of

employment. He was thoroughly familiar with all the points at issue, and his incisive remarks would at times bring a half-dozen of his opponents to their feet at once with interruptions and protests, and his sharp and telling retorts elicited loud applause from the Republican benches. The outbursts of Republican applause increased the anger of Mr. Mills and his followers, and a systematic attempt was made to stop Mr. Phelps in the middle of his argument, but without heeding the opposition storm, he made the most pungent speech of the debate.

The "Mills Bill" never became a law.

A bill was before the House to arrange a conference for the purpose of promoting arbitration and encouraging reciprocal commercial relations between this country, Mexico, and the South American countries, a policy that had been originated by Mr. Blaine, during the brief administration of Mr. Garfield. This measure Mr. Phelps advocated as vigorously at this session as he did a like bill in the previous Congress.

Petitions, numerously signed, had been presented to Congress for the issue of a few millions of dollars in paper currency to represent fractional parts of a dollar and a bill was brought before the House providing for such an issue. Mr. Phelps approved of this measure, and in his argument in its favor, he contended that working men and farmers, and all those living not conveniently to money-order offices, were in absolute need of such a currency which they could use in the mails when they wanted to buy any article worth less than a dollar. The bill providing for such a fractional currency, which would be a public convenience even to this day, was adopted in the House by a large majority, but failed in the Senate.

The "Fisheries Retaliation Bill," designed to protect our fisheries, especially on the Canada coast, which failed of passage in the preceding Congress, came up again and Mr. Phelps never appeared to better advantage in any debate. At times this one was very acrimonious. No

speech he ever made received more laudation than his opening remarks on this measure, in which he denounced in scathing language the vacillating and reprehensible policy of the Administration in not enforcing the laws and treaties already in existence. He showed the whip-saw game of the Administration in this whole affair, pointing out how Secretary Bayard made a decision in one direction and the President in the opposite, so that two political points could be made on the same subject. His comments on the refusal of the President for eighteen months to apply the retaliatory law while hundreds of American fishing vessels were being boarded by Canadian officers, held up, and our fishermen thrown into prisons without even an explanation from the Canadian Government or a demand for one on the part of our Government, cut like a razor, and made the Democrats wince, while the Republicans applauded vigorously.

A report in the Baltimore *American* said:

Mr. Phelps's speech was grandly eloquent, and when he assured his hearers that the Republicans were willing, aye, eager, to give the President all the power he wanted to enforce the retaliatory act, and that the country would back him even in war, if necessary, to retain the self-respect of the American Government and its people there were storms of applause from the galleries. Mr. Phelps not only demonstrated his oratorical powers, but he displayed statesmanship of the highest order. Perry Belmont, who is Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, attempted to ask questions and assume familiarity with the subject under discussion, but he made a botch of the whole thing.

For some time before Mr. Phelps began talking and during the speech Postmaster-General Dickinson, who is credited with having written the jingo message on the retaliation act, sat beside Mr. Belmont and coached him continually. Evidently Mr. Dickinson went to the House for that purpose. He sat within arm's length of Mr. Belmont while the latter was delivering his alleged reply to Mr. Phelps, and he attempted to

put words into the mouth of the Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs. Dickinson's action in coming on the floor of the House to coach a member who was defending the Administration of which he was a Cabinet member, was unprecedented in this country.

A prominent Democratic newspaper, which was never very friendly to the New Jersey Congressman, portrayed the incident in this way:

The debate on the retaliation bill in the House was more interesting to-day. The speeches were better and the oratory was more animated. William Walter Phelps spoke first. He is a very smooth talker; his sentences are like parts of a finished oration, and what he says is not effeminate if his manner is. Indeed, the contrast between his manner and his speech seemed almost a paradox. His bang was brushed down more smoothly than usual over his forehead, and reached from his eye-brows to the crown of his head. This is a long distance on Mr. Phelps's head, and when you get to the crown you find a very pretty, shiny little bald spot. In the vigor of his speech the bald spot flashed into sight every now and then like a flash-light on a dark coast. Mr. Phelps wore a gray sack suit, whose waistcoat buttoned so high in the neck that it only allowed to show about three square inches of a very bright crimson scarf. The coat was opened, and one of Mr. Phelps's favorite attitudes during his speech was to stand with his thumbs in his waistcoat pockets and make gestures with the muscles of his face. In this feat he was very successful, and in what he said the New Jersey Congressman was no chicken. He handled the President's special message with keener sarcasm than was used the day the sensational document was read in the Senate. He spared neither the President nor Mr. Belmont. Indeed, he worried the latter as a terrier worries a rat. He was downright mean toward the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee when the latter ventured to interrupt him with a question. Mr. Phelps purposely misunderstood the question and put a wrong interpretation on it. Mr. Belmont tried to explain, but Mr. Phelps would not let him. Mr. Belmont

flushed and raised his voice. Mr. Phelps continued to misconstrue the question. Both the gentlemen were talking at the same time—Phelps cool and heartless, and Belmont provoked, embarrassed, and unable to get in a word of explanation. Mr. Phelps would not yield, and Mr. Belmont was forced to sit down and wait until his own time came for speaking.

But Mr. Phelps was not always in cruel antagonism to his political opponent, Mr. Belmont, who, as the head of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, was occupying a chair somewhat too large for him. The latter had on one occasion reported from his committee a resolution appropriating $50,000 for an American exhibit at a forthcoming centenary exposition at Melbourne, New South Wales. This appropriation was spitefully opposed by that class of members who have a disposition to give the British lion's tail an uncomfortable twist whenever an opportunity occurs. How Mr. Phelps went to the aid of his Democratic colleague was told in a dispatch to the Boston *Herald*:

Mr. Crain had yesterday read a description of Australia and that part of the world from an old copy of Colton's Atlas, and poked fun at that far-off heathen and benighted country.

To-day Wm. Walter Phelps proceeded to give the present, the real and amazing, figures of wealth, population, and progress in those countries, and his speech put a very different face upon the matter.

Of course, Perry Belmont, as Chairman of the important Committee on Foreign Affairs, was the manager of the bill, but he was utterly helpless.

It is most pitiful sometimes to witness Mr. Belmont's weakness and embarrassment when any bill from his committee comes before the House. He stammers and breaks down and looks the picture of hopelessness. To-day Mr. Phelps came over from the Republican side and took a seat beside Mr. Belmont, coached him, and made the speech presenting and defending. It was a queer comment on the intellectual aspect

of the Democratic side of the House when the Chairman of one of its most important committees is obliged to send for a Republican to do what is expected of a Chairman. It was a complete and unqualified acknowledgment of helplessness and incapacity.

Mr. Phelps's speech in support of the bill appropriating $50,000 was characteristic of the man. He never speaks except when he has something to say, and never speaks for effect, except effect upon the vote of the House, and does not appear to care for or observe the existence of the galleries. When he has something to say which he thinks is of moment and ought to be said, he rises and says it in terse, pure, and vigorous English, and stops as soon as he has said it. His arguments and oratory carried the day and the resolution went triumphantly through.

The State of New Jersey presented to the National Government two statues of distinguished Jerseymen. One was a marble statue of Richard Stockton, a famous statesman of the Revolutionary era and a Signer of the Declaration of Independence; the other was a bronze figure of General Philip Kearny, the most dashing and heroic soldier who ever went to the battlefield from that State. Both names were honorably identified with the history of New Jersey and with the United States. Congress passed a joint resolution accepting the statues and assigning them to positions in Statuary Hall, in the Capitol—the old hall of the House of Representatives, set aside by Congress for the statues of citizens of exalted fame.

August 21, 1888, was designated for the ceremonies and both Houses adjourned to attend, while many citizens of New Jersey were among the throng of spectators. Mr. Phelps was chosen to make the presentation address. The occasion did not call for argumentation, but oratory, and in no address that the speaker ever made was there displayed a more pure and classic eloquence. He sketched briefly the lives of the two celebrated men, so widely

different, and drew a charming comparison between the genius of the calm and reasoning statesman and the daring and fearless warrior. In conclusion he said of Kearny:

He cared nothing for details; he ignored them all, that he might concentrate all his energies upon the great principle for which he strove. Toward that object he rolled in molten stream his past, his present, his future, his memories and hopes, his courage and his parts, all that there was in him. Such enthusiasm could not wait for the slow processes of reason. He appealed often to instinct, knowing that he was a child of genius and that genius is kind to her children. The appeal was often not in vain, and then Indian and Mexican and Algerine and Italian and Confederate looked upon him in his rapid strategy and magnificent charge as an inspired madman; and yet, when unwilling to trust to these dangerous gifts, he appealed to the ordinary processes of mankind. He would show the power to plan and organize, which is the basis of the most solid military character. His intensity of nature, however, generally controlled him, and brought with it all its natural advantages and disadvantages. He could see only the object at which he aimed, and in pursuit of that object he would ride roughshod over everything in his way, not from indifference, not from unkindness, but his look was focussed on the distant object, and could not be changed. Had this fierce enthusiasm, this concentration of fiery genius, been for an unworthy object, it would have been inexcusable and baneful. Fortunately, it was almost always directed to a noble and unselfish end, and those over whom he rode healed their wounds and forgave him, knowing that he was riding desperately at a common enemy. Brave as a lion, tender as a woman, his portrait remains the beau ideal of a soldier, and the picture of that slim, handsome figure riding alone to its death at Chantilly, with his bridle in his teeth and his only remaining arm waving his sword, goes down to history as symbolic of the character and conduct of this gallant leader, the Murat of our volunteer army.

The statues were unveiled after the speaking was over,

Mr. Richard Stockton taking the white drapery from the statue of his great-grandfather, and Mr. J. Watts Kearny drawing the flag from the bronze figure of his father, General Kearny.

When this unusually long session of Congress terminated, the record showed that Mr. Phelps had participated influentially in all the work of the House, and that many bills for useful purposes that had not attracted national attention had been made laws largely through his efforts, and he was justified in viewing with gratification and pride the public duties he had faithfully performed throughout a laborious session.

He found it, however, impossible to conscientiously do all that some of his constituents asked of him. A powerful labor organization asked him to vote for a bill to establish a system of telegraphy to be controlled by the government of the United States. He replied in a letter defining his reasons for declining to support such a project. He declared it to be one of the fundamental principles of democratic government in this country, and had always been, that nothing should be done for the people that the people could do for themselves, and in that doctrine he believed. He held that our people are capable of managing their own business enterprises. What they really need is encouragement to depend upon government powers less and upon themselves more. Governmental control of telegraph is one of the methods of "paternal government" practised in Europe. We do not want to borrow these methods. Among other objections, there is the one that they necessitate constant espionage and interference with the affairs of the people. All such meddling, our ideas, natural and acquired, would promptly resent. The control of the telegraph would be only the first step. The next would be to make the government seize and operate express and railroad companies, and all other corporate enterprise of extensive service, and give it power to appoint a vast

army of public officials, and thus foster all the demoralization of perpetual office-seeking by the people.

Before leaving Washington there came to him an opportunity to do a generous act, not only for the Government, but for the whole people of a Texas town. He had the controlling ownership in a large tract of land in the Panhandle of the Lone Star State. The United States Government had come into possession of several sections of this land, on part of which was built a fort, and the Government sold what it did not need to settlers. As a consequence, the town of Mobeltie, a county seat, grew up around this fort. The Government had made its own survey, but it was subsequently discovered that a blunder had been made in this survey and that the fort was located on the land controlled by Mr. Phelps, and that the latter was practically the owner of the fort, court-house, jail, cemetery, and the homes of several hundred inhabitants. The settlers were alarmed for fear that they might be evicted from their homes, but Mr. Phelps quieted them at once by making an offer to the Government, which was accepted, to exchange for the fort and village site, an equal number of sections of unimproved land, relinquishing all claim to the improvements made by the settlers.

CHAPTER XIX

Destruction of Beautiful Teaneck Grange by Fire—Bears the Severe Loss with Calmness—The Picturesque Ruins to Remain Untouched—Stables and Out-Buildings Consumed Five Months Later—Family Move to a New Home

IT seems to have been well understood that on New Year's Day, 1888, Congressman Phelps would, as usual, be at home to all callers from Bergen County and other counties of his district, and in fact, to all his friends from everywhere. Hundreds came—those on every step of the social scale—Bergen County farmers, men from New Jersey and New York whose names were familiar in politics, business, and literature. There was something of a repetition of the social function that marked the completion of the new home the year before. Mrs. Phelps being too ill to be present, Miss Phelps did the honors of this reception, giving all the visitors a truly hearty welcome. One of the guests, inspired by the unusual experience, manifested his pleasure in these lines, which were printed in a local newspaper:

Soft and glimmering the rays of the orb of the day,
Flickered thro' the heated halls of Teaneck Grange,
Kissing here and there a spot in Nature's nest,
For beauty, love, and honor.
Without ostentation, the touch of cultured hands,
The choice of trained and gifted eyes
Hath multiplied the favors that unfold themselves to view:
Beauty in bric-a-brac, rich and rare,

Love in colors and art, blending with thoughts that study
And travel alone could weld into one.
Grand gift divine—a home.
And yet fit for a king, for house of royal line,
Its portals open wide this day to sons of Bergen,
The yule log burned and threw back
The challenge to rays of sun—for hospitality.
The warm grasp, the kind words, the hearty welcome,
Were cheer enough from genial host
Held high in the esteem of a favored people.
May the New Year bring him his heart's desire;
May it bless indeed his own;
May his cup o'erflow with health and honor;
And may the Grange ever stand
A fit setting for Bergen's noblest son.

L. Fosdick.

It was no doubt far from the thoughts of any present on this occasion that it would be the last of the happy gatherings of the kind that would ever take place in that great and quaintly constructed house, with its priceless collection of art treasures from the ends of the earth, to feast the sense of the beautiful and curious.

It was nearly midnight on the 1st day of April, 1888, that Mr. Phelps, when returning to his apartments in Washington after an evening spent with friends, found on the table in his bedroom two telegrams which told him that at an early hour that evening his home at Teaneck, where his family then was, had been totally destroyed by fire, with a loss of very nearly all of its valuable contents. He disturbed no one on receiving this startling news, but very early in the morning quietly awakened his secretary, told him what had happened, stating that he was going to take an immediate train for New York. He asked the secretary to accompany him to the station, which would save his time in talking over some matters and giving him instructions. He left on the train without once alluding to the great calamity which no doubt

was making him sore at heart, but it was a fine test of his philosophy to never lament over misfortunes which cannot be averted.

The fire which destroyed the Teaneck mansion was caused by an explosion of gas which had in some unaccountable manner filled the art gallery, and it has been supposed that some one unconsciously turned on the gas in the pipe that supplied the seventy-five jets in the gallery. It was Sunday evening and the attention of the Superintendent of the Grange was called to the odor of escaping gas by the inmates of the house. He traced the origin of the leak to the art gallery, and when he opened an outlet in the gallery the escaping gas came in contact with a lighted jet in the hallway which caused a terrific explosion, prostrating the Superintendent and filling the whole gallery with flames. All effort to stay the fire was unsuccessful and the flames in a short time spread along every thoroughfare of the house, and very soon all efforts to save the building had to be abandoned, for the facilities for checking a considerable conflagration were neither at hand on the premises, nor could they be procured from the neighboring towns of Hackensack and Englewood in time to be of practical benefit. In this dilemma the only course of action was that of saving as much as possible of the contents of the house. The report of the explosion and the blaze that soon illuminated the surrounding country drew many people from a considerable distance, the earlier arrivals being of service in the work of salvage.

The gallery was so quickly a mass of flames that it was impossible to save many of the pictures, only three or four being taken out. Aided by the willing hands of neighbors, some of the furniture, art works, books, etc., were saved from the other apartments, as the fire did not spread so rapidly from room to room, owing to the solid walls. Mrs. Phelps and Miss Phelps, while their hearts were filled with grief at the calamity which had so suddenly befallen them, did not become prostrated or stand

idly by, but shared with others in the work at hand and with the utmost coolness gave directions to those who came to their aid in saving from destruction the articles of the most value.

When the fire first started, messengers were dispatched to Englewood and Hackensack for assistance, but the condition of the roads was such that the building was consumed when the firemen arrived. They rendered valuable service in removing and protecting the saved property.

Thus, within about an hour, this beautiful home, with its associations of love, friendship, hopes, ambitions, and achievements, was a smouldering ruin, only bare walls and four tall chimneys marking the spot so lately ornamented by tower, gables, minarets, dormers, and slanting roofs.

The single piece of wood in the structure unconsumed was a bit of timber forming part of a small porch at the south end of the art gallery. Now it still protrudes from the wall immediately over the iron door—a door, by the way, that is credited by some with responsibility for the destruction of the residence. It could not be opened from the outside and therefore impeded efforts in the important first moments. At the north of the residence, and within a few feet of it, the wooden cover over a well escaped the fire and still stands.

The "Phelps Ruin" at once became a great curiosity, not only to the neighboring communities, but throughout a wide extent of country. Driving, bicycling, and walking parties visit it daily in pleasant season to admire the picturesque beauty of its vine-covered walls standing in irregular and massive outline, while the tall chimneys stand like green crowned sentinels over the scene. At this period tall trees, grown from seed dropped by passing birds, rear their heads above the highest walls. An especially attractive example of this is a white birch in the very centre of the art gallery, its symmetrical and delicate outlines suggestive of the glory which the room

presented before its destruction. Those who were familiar with the house in its completeness now gaze along the irregular rows of crumbling stones, moss- and vine-covered by Time's unrelenting hand, and picture it as it was: Here adjoining the parlor and music-room were the apartments of the mistress of the manse; along this eastern wall, bordered in its outer length and turnings by a piazza, ran the corridor from entrance hall to dining-room, along which the guest paused at intervals to inspect gems of art from many lands; at this spot in the hall was the Garfield portrait; there hung the pastel of the Bernhardt in a subdued light that gave striking effect to her dramatic pose; a curiously wrought box of aromatic wood stood near, its fragrance penetrating the entire house when a humid atmosphere prevailed—it was a memento of Capt. John J. Phelps's trip around the world and was procured in the Far East. Up there, in the second story of the original farmhouse, was the large private room of Miss Phelps—an apartment wholly original in finishing and furnishings, with whitewood desk built into the old dormer window, with broad couch, grill-work screen, with a decorative scheme unique, original, rich in quaint sketches, etchings, carvings, and bric-a-brac from pen, pencil, and brush of intimate friends. This was above the hallway and drawing-room where friendship and hospitality felt their warmest glow, and political policies of far more that local import were discussed and given their place in the schedule of events. Over to the left is all that is left of the master's "den"—the spot where he worked out the many problems of private business and public service which engaged his active and fertile mind. That rusty remnant of an iron box was the safe which contained his personal papers—some of them secrets of state and party purposes. Memory becomes instantly alert in gazing upon the spot to-day—rehabilitating the building in its former glory, filling it with the fulness of social graces of hospitality and philanthropy.

Mr. Phelps reached Teaneck as soon as he could get there the day after the fire, and there he found Mrs. Phelps and his daughter, with the Superintendent, waiting for him and looking sadly upon the ruins. He was deeply moved while he looked upon the work of the destroyer, but soon calmly mastered the situation, and the next morning he leased for the occupancy of his family what was known as the "Griggs House," a pretentious structure, located upon a plot of twenty acres of ground adjoining the Teaneck estate. This property was shortly afterwards purchased, the grounds handsomely laid out and improved, and the house reconstructed into the large and attractive country residence which has since been the Phelps home at Teaneck. Two days later the Congressman was back in Washington occupying his seat in the House and busy with the affairs of the nation.

The thoughtfulness and appreciation of Mr. Phelps for any service or kindness is indicated in the appended note, which was printed in a local newspaper:

A CARD OF THANKS

EDITOR *Times*:—I shall have to ask the courtesy of your columns, after all, to thank my friends and neighbors for their kind services at the fire which destroyed Teaneck Grange. I have sought to avoid the necessity of the formal and usual public acknowledgment. I was reluctant to bring my private loss again to the public eye, and besides, the services rendered were so prompt and zealous, that I wanted to thank each one who rendered them, personally. But I find the brief period of my home visits allowed by Congressional duties makes it impossible for me to meet them all, so I am compelled in this way to express to those whom I have not yet met, my deep gratitude. Especially I want to thank the Fire Companies of Hackensack and Englewood. The united efforts of all have saved for me some memorials of my old home. As these memorials are seen within new walls, they will serve to remind me that the friendship of Bergen County, which for nearly a

quarter of a century never failed me in prosperity, was found as warm and as helpful when misfortune came.

Yours very truly,

Wm. Walter Phelps.

Teaneck, April 30, 1888.

It was in the night of August 14, 1888, nearly five months after the burning of the mansion, that the extensive stables and all adjoining out-buildings and coachmen's quarters were destroyed by fire, thus completely wiping out every structure connected with the private residence and appointments of Teaneck Grange. The origin of the fire was unknown, and it was so rapid in its spreading that little could be accomplished in the work of saving the contents, excepting the horses, which were all rescued. Nearly all the carriages, harness, and other equipments of the large buildings, with a considerable quantity of goods stored after the destruction of the residence, were lost in the consuming flames.

At this date Mr. Phelps was in the southern part of New Jersey, busy with campaign work, and did not hear of this fire until the evening of the next day, when he arrived at Asbury Park, where he was to address an immense mass meeting under the auspices of all the New Jersey Republican clubs. When informed of the catastrophe, he merely remarked: "Well, the fire fiend seems to be pursuing me," and then went on the platform and made the most logical and effective political speech of his life, to an audience the largest he ever addressed.

CHAPTER XX

Declines to Continue in Congress—New Jersey Republicans Resolve to Name Him for the Presidency in the National Convention of 1888—He Refuses to Have His Name Presented—Consents to Become a Candidate for the Vice-Presidential Nomination—Receives a Gratifying Support in the Convention, but the Claims of the Empire State are Paramount and a Combination Nominates Levi P. Morton—Active in the Presidential Campaign—Takes Part in Nomination of President Harrison—The Phelps Guards of Paterson, and Their Warm Reception in Washington—Mr. Blaine His Guest when Appointed Secretary of State

AFTER accepting the nomination for Congress in 1886, Mr. Phelps gave out distinctly that he would not again be a candidate for a seat in the national House of Representatives. At the end of that term he would have served eight years in the House, and he thought that was all that his party, or the voters of his district, could reasonably call upon him to do in the line of Congressional service. As the time for another election approached, all the political signs pointed to a Republican majority in the next House. In that case, it was certain that if Mr. Phelps were a member he would be placed at the head of one of the most important committees, and the probability was that he would be made the Chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means, which carries with it the leadership of the majority. He felt that he lacked the physical strength to undergo the strain and responsibilities which must always devolve upon a foremost member of a majority party in the House. He therefore thought himself justified in resisting all importunities to

accept another nomination for the seat he had so long occupied. His party was finally convinced that in all fairness it should respect his wishes, and thus he took the initial step for his voluntary retirement from Congress at a time when there existed no evidence of satiety on the part of the people.

It was known to Mr. Phelps long before 1888 that there was no possibility of Mr. Blaine allowing his name to go before the Republican National Convention of that year, but the New Jersey leader intended to do his best in rallying all the "thick and thin" Blaine men in the party to an earnest support of whoever might be the party nominee.

One of the advance movements of the campaign of 1888 was a notable banquet given in Baltimore, in January, by the Central Republican Club of that city. It was attended by leading Senators and statesmen from Washington, and several Governors of States. Senators Evarts, Hawley, and Chandler were of the speakers, but Congressman Phelps made the rousing speech of the evening, marking out what must be the issues of the approaching campaign, and encouraging the Republicans to deserve and expect victory in the presidential contest. It was one of the best displays of the speaker's inspiriting oratory, and being widely quoted in the newspapers produced a visible public effect.

Ever since the election of 1886, it had been constantly suggested in Republican councils that Mr. Phelps would make a most available candidate for the Vice-Presidency on the next Republican ticket. His fine national record, his acknowledged ability and familiarity with government affairs, all qualified him for a vice-presidential nominee. It was urged that his family relations to Connecticut, his business connections and acquaintance in New York, and his citizenship and personal popularity in New Jersey, would contribute largely to the chances of the Republicans carrying those usually doubtful States. As the time

for the convention drew near, his was the leading name for the Vice-Presidency canvassed by thousands of Republican journals from one end of the Union to the other.

It was also a strongly expressed opinion in many journals that his name would be an excellent one for the first place on the national ticket, in the event that a choice could not easily be made from the unusual number of prominent Republicans whose names were foreshadowed to be presented to the convention. Mr. Phelps gave little thought to this suggestion, but the Republicans of New Jersey regarded the prompting as worthy of consideration, and in their State convention which met to choose presidential delegates, the following resolution was read:

Resolved, That the Republicans of New Jersey are proud to call the attention of the National Convention to the name of one who is eminently fitted to lead the party in the next campaign. With an honorable record in foreign diplomacy; with a long experience as one of the leaders in the National Congress; wise in council and prompt in action; a publicist and yet a man of affairs whose extensive business relations acquaint him with the wants of the people; an early and persistent and recognized champion of the rights of labor; with a name in all the States as a synonym of honesty and capacity; we pledge to him the electoral vote of New Jersey, and, believing him to be the strongest candidate in the doubtful States, present the name of William Walter Phelps.

The rules were suspended and the resolution passed unanimously and with vociferous cheering for New Jersey's choice.

All kinds of tickets were made up by the newspapers, which combined the name of Mr. Phelps with that of all the leading statesmen who were aspiring to the first position. A ticket comprising the name of Robert T. Lincoln and William Walter Phelps was largely mentioned and aroused much enthusiasm among the young men of the

party, but before the convention, Mr. Lincoln's name was withdrawn from the list of candidates and Illinois gave its support to Judge Gresham of Chicago.

On the first ballot in the convention, the leading candidates stood in this order: Sherman, Gresham, Depew, Alger, Harrison, Allison.

Mr. Phelps refused to have his name presented to the convention for the Presidency. Nevertheless, he received twenty-five votes, including those of his own State. Had he not discountenanced the formal introduction of his name, doubtless his vote would have been much larger, for he had warm friends in a number of the State delegations who would gladly have given him their support had he been announced as a candidate.

There was a phenomenally long contest in this convention; the balloting continued for five days, during which the supporters of each of the foremost candidates adhered loyally to their favorite. But the time came when some sort of a compromise became a necessity, and after much manœuvring, New York was induced to lead off in such a movement by withdrawing from the field Mr. Depew. Following this, but after some delay, Iowa dropped Mr. Allison's name, and then came the combination of the large States of New York and Pennsylvania, Indiana and Iowa, which terminated the struggle in favor of Mr. Harrison, with an understanding that there should be yielded New York its candidate for the Vice-Presidency, Mr. Morton.

This result put at an end any probability of Mr. Phelps for the second place, but his adherents were by no means content with the "arrangement" for the vice-presidential candidate, in which they had no part. They believed that while Mr. Morton would be strong in one doubtful State, Mr. Phelps would be strong in all, and they decided that the name of their favorite should be placed before the nominating body. He was therefore named in behalf of New Jersey by Hon. John W. Griggs in a bright speech

which arrested much attention, and the unanimous criticism of the speaker was: "That young man will be apt to be heard from hereafter." Mr. Griggs's nomination of Mr. Phelps was seconded in able remarks by General Gibson of Ohio, Congressman J. P. Dolliver of Iowa, Congressman Boutelle of Maine, Judge Rosenthal of Texas, Mr. Eagan of Nebraska, Mr. Fuller of North Carolina, and Mr. Sims of Virginia. It follows that Mr. Morton, with all his advantages, was successful, the vote received by Mr. Phelps being 119. While the New Jersey Congressman was acceptable to all the candidates in the field as a running mate, he was the decided preference of those who at the start had the highest votes—Mr. Sherman and Mr. Gresham.

Mr. Phelps took a cheerful view of the result and was quickly back at his desk in Washington, striving to finish up his official labors so as to take a lively part in the presidential campaign as soon as it should fairly open. In a published interview he said:

> When New York united all its factions and strength and asked for the nomination of Mr. Morton, the Convention did well not to refuse the request of the Empire State.

The office of Mr. Phelps in New York was a thronged and busy political centre throughout the fall of 1888. The callers were so numerous from all sections of New Jersey and elsewhere that it was impossible for him to give them all interviews, and part of that work had to be done by his political secretary. Mrs. Phelps and Miss Phelps were in Europe, and the Congressman gave his whole time to the presidential canvass. He was on the platform almost daily, it being his custom to remain in his office in the forenoon and each afternoon go to some point in New Jersey where he had an appointment for an evening speech, so that before Election day was reached he had addressed great mass meetings in every important

point in the State, and in addition he gave some time to platform speaking at large places in other States.

After the election, and at the beginning of December, he went to the opening of the short session of the House which would last only until the 4th of March following, when his Congressional career would finally close.

The Democrats had lost the Presidency and the next House and were in no mood to enact any more legislation of any moment, therefore but little save the routine work was performed during this brief three months' life of the House.

The Republicans had failed to secure a majority on joint ballot in the New Jersey Legislature, and at the election for United States Senator in January, a Democrat was chosen. Republican members of the Legislature wished to compliment their leading Congressman with their votes in the caucus, but he was disinclined to a fruitless nomination and that honor was bestowed elsewhere.

Mr. Phelps was one of the Committee of Arrangements appointed by the House to conduct the ceremonies of Mr. Harrison's inauguration, and this was his last official duty as a Representative in Congress.

The inauguration was attended in a body by the "Phelps Guards" of Paterson, two hundred strong. This organization was formed in 1872, when its namesake was for the first time nominated for Congress, and it followed his fortunes all through his political career. Its members were the most prominent and respectable young Republicans of Paterson, and from that class year after year its recruits came, and it was always an acknowledged power in all the political campaigns of the memorable Fifth District. The New Jersey statesman welcomed the "Old Guard" to the National Capitol with his accustomed cordiality, and all in his power was done to make their stay interesting and pleasant. Before leaving for their homes on the day following the inauguration, the Guards serenaded Mr. Phelps at his hotel. While standing on

the balcony with Mrs. Blaine and Miss Phelps behind him, he made a brief and encouraging address to the visitors drawn up in line before him, telling them that they could go to their homes with the utmost confidence that the new Administration would serve the country faithfully, intelligently, and patriotically. He then accompanied the Guards to the White House, where, at his invitation, the new President came on the piazza and reviewed the fine body of New Jersey's Republicans as they marched in front of him. This was Mr. Phelps's last meeting with an organization of zealous friends and followers who had for so many years borne his name with honor and pride.

Mr. Blaine went to Washington in January, 1889, and was for a time the guest of Mr. Phelps. It was apparent to all that he was to be the Secretary of State in the Harrison Cabinet, therefore when his appointment to that position immediately followed the inauguration, it but fulfilled public expectation.

CHAPTER XXI

Commissioner to Samoan Conference—His First Meeting with Bismarck—Interesting Extract from His Diary—Has English Adopted as Language of Conference—Dubbed the "Peacemaker"—Splendid Diplomatic Success—Returns with "Peace and Honor" Treaty—Warmly Received by the President Who Presents Him with a Commission as Minister to Berlin—Declines Receptions

NEARLY the first important business that made a claim upon the new Administration was the naming of three commissioners to act in conference with like officials from England and Germany in the adjustment of the difficulties in which these three countries were involved concerning affairs in the Samoan Islands.

For ten years German merchants and German officials had been trying to gain advantages in Samoa and frequently their efforts were not attended by the circumspection and regard for the rights of others which is required of enlightened nations when such actions are exposed to the criticism of their peers. The Government at Berlin had been encouraging and fostering colonization and not only failed to call its officials sharply to account for their actions in Samoa, but it seems as if it, at least, overlooked many of their high-handed transactions. As a matter of fact, when these transactions were investigated, it was found that the German Government had not taken any part in their conception or execution, yet its failure to check the overzealous officials left the Government in a very lame attitude.

Internal dissension had been fomenting among the natives until these beautiful and once peaceful islands of

the Pacific had been reduced to a state of anarchy and harassed by the baleful hand of civil war. In this reduced state, the German officials attempted acts which were tantamount to annexation, in violation of their treaty, and but for the protection of the American consul and his courageous interference it is very probable the Germans would have accomplished their purpose and the German flag would have remained floating over Apia.

Malietoa, the lawful king, was deeply attached to the English-speaking residents. Treaties had been made by Samoa with the United States in 1878, with Germany in January, 1879, and with England in August, 1879. In 1884, under pressure, a fresh treaty was made with Germany, practically handing over the islands to that power, which was afterwards disallowed by England and America and repudiated by Malietoa himself, as having been extorted by threats.

For the next three years the condition of the Samoan Islands was one of turmoil and civil war, instigated by German officials, who kept an armed force there continually. The German policy finally culminated in the imprisonment and banishment of Malietoa and the establishment by German authority of a rebel chief named Tamasese as king. All this time there were vigorous protests by the United States against the conduct of Germany. There was a constant diplomatic correspondence, and a conference at Washington, all without any practical result. In the meantime, affairs on the islands were growing worse and there was a rebellion of the natives against the government of Tamasese.

Secretary of State Bayard seemed to have been unfortunate in his handling of the Samoan affair. Prince Bismarck grew more irritated and impatient as the troubles became protracted and no friendly solution presented itself, and the correspondence between Berlin and Washington on the subject became strained. Bismarck laid all the blame on the American consuls in Samoa, whom

he charged with continually opposing and thwarting Germany and encouraging disputes between the natives and the German officials. Mr. Bayard replied that the troubles in Samoa were owing to German influence in supporting Tamasese in his rebellion. There was a strong public opinion in the United States at this time that Samoa and its king had been unjustly treated by the Germans and that the American Government had been to some extent outmanœuvred. Mr. Bayard had asked the assent of Lord Salisbury and Prince Bismarck to the publication of all the documents and proceedings in the Samoan matter, but both the German and English Ministers refused.

This was the state of the Samoan affairs, accentuated by a new outbreak of hostilities among the natives, when the Democratic Administration retired and President Harrison was inaugurated on March 4, 1889. Congress had provided for the appointment of three commissioners to attend a second conference with commissioners from England and Germany to be held at Berlin. Mr. Blaine at once thought of Mr. Phelps, in whom the American statesman had the greatest confidence at all times, and especially where a knowledge of diplomacy and acquaintance with European methods and a natural tact in controversy were required.

When Mr. Phelps was informed of his selection, he hesitated to accept the commission. He had retired to his New Jersey estate and did not expect active service for some time. It was well known that he was booked for diplomatic service. In the newspapers and in high official circles his name was constantly mentioned for either the mission to England, France, or Germany. It was understood that he had expressed a preference for France, while at the same time it was expected that Mr. Whitelaw Reid would receive the appointment to England. Circumstances arose which prevented the President from appointing Mr. Reid to the Court of St. James, and he was offered the French mission, which he accepted.

It was then that Mr. Blaine wrote to Mr. Phelps saying that it had been his hope to send Mr. Phelps to France and expressing the belief that Mr. Reid would not wish to remain a long time at Paris, and if Mr. Phelps should so desire it, Mr. Blaine would try to have him named as Mr. Reid's successor. In the same letter, the Secretary of State, who had been a faithful friend and admirer of Mr. Phelps, urged him to accept the temporary appointment to the Samoan Conference, saying:

> But no friend, let me add, should make you underrate the Samoan appointment. The question referred to your commission is far the most important (unless it be the fisheries) we have had to settle for many years—the most important that I can recall on the Continent for fifty years. I intended to pay you a compliment of a very high order when I recommended your nomination. You can always rest with the utmost confidence of my having you at all times on the tablet of my memory and of my heart and that nothing I can do shall ever be left undone to promote your wishes.

This reminder of the ardent personal friendship that had so long existed between these brilliant men at once overcame Mr. Phelps's objections to undertaking the public duty thus pointed out to him, and he accepted the commission which gave him the opportunity of meeting the great Bismarck in diplomacy and winning a victory of much advantage to his country and credit to himself. His conferees on the commission were John A. Kasson of Iowa and George H. Bates of Delaware. These appointments were confirmed by the Senate on March 18, 1889. Mr. Kasson had served as Minister to Austria, as had Mr. Phelps. Mr. Bates was a Democrat and a distinguished lawyer in Delaware. He had been Mr. Bayard's special Commissioner to Samoa, sent out when the Samoan Conference in Washington broke up. He acquired very decided opinions about the conduct of Germany in the islands.

In the *Century Magazine* for April, Mr. Bates had an article which was evidently written before he knew of his appointment as a Commissioner to the Berlin Conference, and in which he said:

> The course pursued by Germany, the insults to our citizens and our flag, and more than all, to our government itself, in deceiving us with assurances which were belied by simultaneous inconsistent actions, certainly should forbid further efforts in the direction of co-operative action until disclaimers are accompanied with fruit meet for repentance.

This article was taken up and commented upon by all the newspapers of the day as incautious and undiplomatic language for a man chosen for a delicate mission, and it was suggested that he had better stay at home, but no importance was attached to the article in the United States or German Governments, and it was soon forgotten.

The appointment of Mr. Phelps and Mr. Kasson met with universal approval, albeit there was considerable levity in some newspapers over Mr. Phelps's bang and its probable diplomatic effect on the grim German Chancellor.

The Samoan Commissioners, immediately after their appointment, sought all the information they could obtain at the departments in Washington, relating to the Samoan controversy. The newspapers, commenting on the appointments, mentioned the rumor that after he had discharged the duties of Samoan Commissioner, Mr. Phelps would be named for Minister to Germany. This rumor soon reached Europe, and Mr. Pendleton, who was then Minister to Germany, sent a dispatch which was shown to Mr. Phelps while he was receiving his instructions from the State Department. It said that Bismarck had sent up the Emperor's request to know what he could learn of William Walter Phelps, who was spoken of as Mr. Pendleton's successor.

The instructions of Secretary Blaine to the Commis-

sioners emphasized the fact that the conference to be held at Berlin was a renewal of the conference at Washington in 1887, "for the purpose of establishing peace, and an orderly, stable government in the Samoan Islands, on the basis of their recognized independence and the equal rights of the three treaty powers." Mr. Blaine gave the Commissioners all the latitude he could on the subject, telling them that the Government of the United States desired a speedy and amicable solution of all the questions involved, yet he desired them to urge with "temperate firmness" the restoration of the *status quo*, which meant the independence of the natives and the return of Malietoa, and likewise the equality of the three treaty powers in commerce and navigation.

If, Mr. Blaine said, it became absolutely necessary that the three treaty powers should administer the government of Samoa, it was the earnest desire of the President that this intervention should be temporary and avowedly preparatory to the restoration of as complete independence and autonomy as was possible in the islands; that the intervention of the three treaty powers must be on terms of absolute equality, and that the adjustment of claims and titles to land should be matters of important consideration, because the claims of foreigners to land in the islands amounted to more than the whole area of the group.

It will thus be seen that Mr. Blaine adopted essentially the plan and the attitude of Mr. Bayard at the previous conference, and it is a signal proof of the ability of Mr. Phelps and his conferees that they won every point in Berlin after the failure in Washington. In the development of the Conference, it appeared that the American Commissioners had the advantage of being in a more logical and secure position than the Germans.

Mr. Phelps sailed from New York on the 13th of April, 1889, and arrived in Berlin on the 27th of that month. The Commissioners made their headquarters at the Kaiser-

hof, where a magnificent suite of rooms had been engaged for them. The Commissioners representing Germany were Count Herbert Bismarck, Baron de Holstein, and Dr. Krauel. The English Commissioners were Sir Edward Baldwin Malet, at Berlin, the British Ambassador Mr. Charles Stewart Scott, English Minister to Switzerland, and Mr. Joseph Archer Crowe.

Count Herbert Bismarck was head of the German delegation, and his father, the great iron Chancellor, was in closest touch with the developments of the negotiations, even to the smallest details, and he dictated the German policy. Mr. Phelps became the leading spirit on the American side, and he was thus pitted in diplomatic contest with the master mind of the century. Through all the arduous and trying work of the Conference he displayed such rare tact and fertility of resource that he won the admiration and lasting friendship of Prince Bismarck and his son, a friendship that was advantageous to the American statesman later in his career, and of great benefit to the American people.

Official calls occupied the time of the American Commissioners during the first few days before they took up the work of their mission. Among the first calls was one paid to Prince Bismarck in his palace, given him by Emperor William I., at Wilhelm Strasse. Mr. Phelps thus records the event in his diary, May, 1889:

Called at 2 P.M. on Prince Bismarck. In vestibule—an open hall, level with the street—met by Count Herbert. In a few minutes met at the door of the adjacent room by his father. Old, large, feeble, in military coat, carelessly unbuttoned. He told of the Emperor's gift, so valuable because he could go without any descent directly from his library into the garden, which he said was very beautiful, and the only place where he could walk now. He could not walk in the street on account of his popularity. He needed to keep his hat off all the time, or to keep constantly touching it, which was just as bad, and two policemen to keep the crowd back, for every one

seemed to know him. Was not always so popular, and it was pleasanter. It was n't necessary to notice frowns and stares —and, inside (pointing to his heart) their hate did n't harm. He spoke of cause of his popularity and the reverse. After the war, 1872 to 1878, was most unpopular. The Conservatives said he had deserted them—too much water of liberalism in his conservatism. If a man wishes most to serve his country, he must sacrifice his personal pride, or his own consistency —people to manage, parties to manage, monarchs to manage —all can give something to the successful government, and the wise statesman will secure contributions from all. Germany found a monarch necessary; the United States seemed not to. He mentioned the opportunity the Commission had of seeing one of the military functions when the new colors had been given to the first regiment. This caused us to laughingly allude to the awkward appearance we must have made in dress suits, unattractive in the sunlight, beside so many brilliant uniforms. This caused him to remark: "I was wont, when younger, to give one hour a day to changing my clothes. There was my ordinary dress. Then there was need to change to a military suit, followed by a civil dress upon summons from the Emperor. Next came a resumption of citizen's dress, after which there would be another summons in the afternoon when a military dress must be worn. Finally I had to don an evening dress for a dinner party. But later the Emperor graciously consented that I might wear military dress always, and so save thirty hours per month — five good working days." The Chancellor plead sweetly that we would not work Herbert too hard in the Conference—he was very proud of his boy. He spoke cheerfully of the work of the Commissioners and hoped they would speedily settle matters in those unhappy islands. He thought the zeal and self-sufficiency of the consuls were to blame for much that occurred, supposed that we knew the government was not responsible for all they did. He spoke of his Ulm dogs (two of which were by), one given him by the Emperor. Said: "Wife was always happy when she got something of Bret Harte's to read." He was reading Motley's letters. They had roomed together in Göttingen—one talking English and the other German. The English of Prince Bis-

marck was slow and rugged like himself, but his conversation always interesting.

The first session of the Conference was held on the 29th of April, 1889, and Count Herbert Bismarck was chosen president. On the initiative of Mr. Phelps, who, with all the American Commissioners, could understand and talk French, it was decided to conduct the Conference in the English language. This was an innovation in diplomatic negotiations which was very widely commented on at the time and led to much speculation as to the decadence of French and the adoption of English as the future language of diplomacy.

At this session Count Bismarck announced that the German Government had received an official report that Malietoa had expressed his regret and his earnest wish to be reconciled with the German Government. On receiving this report, the Emperor had ordered the release of Malietoa, who was now at liberty to return to Samoa if he chose. This was an important piece of news to the Commissioners as it opened a way by which the *status quo ante* could be regained and thus settle one of the fundamental difficulties of the situation. The announcement was received with gratification.

It was agreed upon to keep the transactions of the Conference secret for the time being, and that pledge was sacredly kept by all the Commissioners. Scraps of information began to leak out through other sources later on and the newspapers published rumors that the Americans were successful in their mission. It soon became known that Mr. Phelps had taken the lead on the American side, and that it was due to his tactful and diplomatic bearing that many concessions were obtained by the Americans, especially in the matter of the immunity granted to Mataafa in the settlement of the government of Apia and of the land question.

The real work of the Conference was done in sub-com-

mittee and it was there that Mr. Phelps showed to advantage. His suavity and grace, combined with a fine logical mind and magnetic effectiveness in conversation, gave him that subtle power which overcomes and conquers in struggles of this kind. He was the American member of the sub-committee to consider the form of the future Samoan government and its connection with municipal affairs, but he also attended the meetings of the other sub-committees and took an active part in their debates. While he clung closely and consistently to the original policy of the United States Government, he always maintained a friendly attitude and address, winning the friendship and admiration of the German and English Commissioners, and even of the great Bismarck himself, who kept in close touch with the work of the Conference, even to the smallest details. Such was the influence of Mr. Phelps upon the progress and development of the negotiations that he was soon dubbed the "Peacemaker," and in this rôle he accomplished what had before been thought impossible because of the failure at the Conference in Washington. Although he was punctilious in attending all the social functions that naturally accompanied such a mission, he worked indefatigably during the weeks the Conference was pending. Every day he was for hours at his desk working out the plans he formed and meeting the suggestions made at the sessions of the sub-committees. He was also in constant communication with Blaine at Washington.

Early in the negotiations, Mr. Phelps saw that it would not be difficult for the American Commissioners to gain what they contended for if a way could be devised to let the Germans retreat gracefully. The Chancellor had apparently seen that his position, or rather the position which overzealous officials and avaricious adventurers in Samoa had forced upon him, was untenable; but it was not to be expected that the imperious Bismarck would completely back down and acknowledge that Germany

had made a flat failure in the Southern Pacific Islands. For two years the press and the people of Germany had presented a bellicose front on the subject and although now the German Government recognized that mistakes had been made and was willing to seek a friendly settlement, yet it would have to come out of the Conference claiming something in order to mollify the press and people, and to this phase of the subject Mr. Phelps addressed himself with all the ingenuity at his command. He got valuable assistance from the English Commissioners, who were willing to act as "honest brokers" between the American and German Commissioners.

One of the first pieces of information to find its way into the newspapers was the agreement on the form of the municipal government of Apia and this was called the "Phelps Compromise."

After seven plenary sittings, the Conference practically finished its work on the 29th of May, but the final meeting was not held until June 14th, because the American Commissioners had to obtain the approval of the Department at Washington. This took longer than was expected on account of some slight differences which were ultimately overcome. It was on the 13th of June that Mr. Phelps cabled to Mr. Blaine that everything was settled and the work of the Conference was done. He asked if the Commission should break up, and the response of the Secretary of State was: "Yes, if well and successfully done." The treaty was not made public at that time, as it had to be ratified by the United States Senate, and the usual courtesy to that body dictated secrecy. As it was afterwards made public, the treaty showed that the United States had won on every material point in contention. The first article provides:

It is declared that the Islands of Samoa are neutral territory in which the citizens and subjects of the Three Signatory Powers have equal rights of residence, trade, and personal

protection. The Three Powers recognize the independence of the Samoan government and the free right of the natives to elect their Chief or King and choose their form of government according to their own laws and customs. Neither of the powers shall exercise any separate control over the Islands or the government thereof.

The same article declared that Malietoa should be recognized as king and his successor should be elected according to the laws and customs of Samoa. A supreme court was provided for and the chief justice, who was to be the supreme judicial officer in the land, with jurisdiction over both local and international disputes, was to be named by the three signatory Powers in common accord, or, failing that agreement, be named by the King of Sweden and Norway. The treaty prohibited the natives from selling their lands to foreigners except under certain restrictions, and it provided for a land court to investigate titles already acquired. The town of Apia was to be under the control of a municipal council consisting of six members and a president, the latter to be agreed upon by the three Powers, or, failing such agreement, to be selected from the nationality of Sweden, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Mexico, or Brazil. The six councillors were to be elected by the tax-payers of Apia, and as the Germans preponderated, this seemed to give the control of Apia to the Germans. Perhaps this was the only point in which the Germans gained a material advantage in the Conference.

The treaty also established a scheme of taxation and revenue for the islands and restricted importation of arms and ammunition and intoxicating liquors.

The treaty was signed by the Commissioners of the three Powers at the Foreign Office in Berlin on the 14th of June. The Commissioners separated with mutual compliments and good wishes. Throughout the negotiations the utmost courtesy and good feeling had been

maintained and all sides seemed satisfied with the result. Within half an hour after the tri-partite agreement had been signed, Count Bismarck left Berlin for Koenigstein, on his regular leave of absence, and Mr. Phelps took a train for Bremerhaven, there to catch the *Fulda* for New York. Messrs. Kasson and Bates tarried in Europe a short time before returning to America.

Mr. Phelps had not only made many friends among the German officials at Berlin, but he had become popular with the German press and people. His hard work and his friendly bearing had earned for him the good wishes of every one and the hope was frequently expressed that his Government would send him back to Berlin in the more permanent position of Minister. These expressions were entirely spontaneous, but the same sentiment was being voiced in America on account of his splendid diplomatic success.

He reached New York on the 24th of June, and was greeted by a number of friends and newspaper men, the latter all being eager for interviews on the "Peace and Honor" treaty which he carried with much care in a little yellow leather bag.

The first talk he had with representatives of the press on landing was in response to their inquiries whether the report was correct that English was the language used in the Conference. He said:

It is a fact, and one of some significance. It is the first time in the history of diplomacy that negotiations have not been carried on in French, the language of diplomacy. It was done on our motion, and as English was the national language of six out of nine of the Commissioners, and the Germans, who speak English well, fell good naturedly in with us, that became the language of the Conference, though we started out in French, which all the Commissioners spoke. It may be that German antipathy to anything French helped to establish this important precedent. I don't know. However, the fact remains. Even the language of the treaty is English, and it

is the first European treaty written in English, which I do not doubt is going to become the language of diplomacy, for the English tongue, through American and English colonization, travel, and trade, is gaining so much more rapidly in use over all other languages in every important part of the world. We all found that good, sturdy, Anglo-Saxon was the most exact and satisfactory tongue in which to couch delicate and intricate points. I rejoice that the new era was inaugurated by us.

The prediction of the thoroughly American diplomat in this interview has been partially fulfilled at least, for since the innovation which he promoted in the Samoan Conference, the proceedings of several noted conferences and international gatherings on the European continent have been conducted in English.

Mr. Phelps hastened the same day of his arrival to Washington, which he reached the following morning and called upon Secretary Blaine, with whom he went to the White House and presented the treaty to President Harrison, who greeted him very cordially.

The best evidence of the satisfaction of President Harrison with the work of Mr. Phelps and his conferees was given with a promptness that surprised and pleased the New Jersey statesman. After a short talk about the Conference and the treaty which had just been delivered, President Harrison opened a drawer and took out a commission as Minister to Germany, which he handed to Mr. Phelps with a very high compliment and an invitation to Mr. Phelps to take breakfast at the White House the following day. With this handsome recognition for brilliant work from the ruler of the nation in his possession, and the compliments of friends and the praise of the press from all parts of the country in his ears, Mr. Phelps retired to his estate in New Jersey to enjoy a well-earned rest.

Many efforts were made to do honor to Mr. Phelps in a public manner for the distinguished triumph obtained

by America in the diplomatic battle at Berlin, but with a modesty and fair-mindedness which always characterized him, he courteously declined such honors. His reasons were given in full to the Phelps Guards of Paterson, N. J. His letter to them shows how he regarded the work of his colleagues. He wrote:

Gentlemen: Your note was one of the pleasantest things which greeted me on my arrival. I mean the note signed by Hilton and Griggs and others of the old members, as your committee, to tell me that "the Guards wished to express their appreciation of my service at the Samoan Conference in Berlin and to tender me a reception and congratulations."

Now, I 'll tell you why I was so long in answering it. I was trying to reconcile inclination with duty, because I wanted very much to accept your invitation.

I cannot do it after all, and I feel sure that you will think my reasons are good ones when you hear them. While waiting to make up my mind I have had many suggestions that various organizations with which I am connected for pleasure or profit proposed to do me similar honor. This has made me think that were I to accept these kindnesses I should lack the time which I must devote to my private affairs, in view of the responsible duties abroad to which the President has assigned me. But another objection is more conclusive—because other people's interests are concerned and I can't disregard them. I don't like to celebrate the results of the Samoan Conference when my colleagues on the Commission are absent. If there is anything to celebrate—and, while a diplomatic padlock ties my own lips, I have not failed to read in the English and German press that in their opinion the interests of the United States and of Samoa were not neglected at Berlin—the credit must be shared at least equally with my accomplished colleagues on the American Commission. To these were largely due the success of the Conference, and I should be loath, by any public celebration in their absence, to indicate that I claimed any more than my share with them of a battle honorably fought.

With grateful acknowledgments of this fresh proof of a

devotion on the part of the Phelps Guards which nearly twenty years has not chilled, I am gratefully yours,

Wm. Walter Phelps.

Teaneck, July 10, 1889.

After the first wave of gratification and applause had passed over the country, partisan papers began to cast doubts upon the measure of success secured by the American Commissioners. These criticisms were all made in the dark, as the terms of the treaty were all kept secret until it was presented to the Senate for ratification. Then the treaty came before that body in January, 1890, and it was published. Then it was known and acknowledged that the American Commissioners had secured practically everything contended for by the Government. It was ratified by the Senate on February 4, 1890, by a vote of 38 to 12, and events proved that it was a wise and successful settlement of difficulties which had for many years disrupted the peace of the beautiful islands in the South Pacific. Happiness and peace were restored to a naturally amiable people.

CHAPTER XXII

Minister to Germany—The Appointment Popular in the United States and in Germany—Cordial Reception at the Berlin Court—The Emperor's Friendly Speech at the Presentation—Search for a Residence—His First Thanksgiving Dinner at Which Many Americans Were Present—Reception by the Empress—The Life of a Diplomat—Its Varied Duties and Many Social Obligations

WITH a unanimity that was surprising the press and the people of the United States greeted the appointment of William Walter Phelps to be Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary to the German Court as a graceful recognition by President Harrison of the splendid diplomatic service the New Jersey statesman had rendered to his country. The appointment became known within a day or two after Mr. Phelps had returned with his Samoan treaty in the famous yellow leather bag, and the country was ringing with the praises of the American Commissioners who had won such a gratifying victory in diplomacy, so that the prompt and substantial reward bestowed upon the leading diplomat found a cordial response in the hearts of the nation. Even the anti-administration newspapers congratulated the Government on such a graceful act and all critics admitted that Mr. Phelps was eminently qualified for the position. Thus were fulfilled the prognostications of the political prophets when Mr. Phelps was appointed a Samoan Commissioner, and thus were fulfilled the political hopes of the German Court after it had become acquainted with the admirable qualities of Mr. Phelps, that he would succeed Minister

Pendleton. Seldom, if ever, has a political appointment met with such universal approval, and it was a peculiar tribute to the genius of Mr. Phelps that after wringing from Germany such a material diplomatic victory, the Germans should be so glad to have him among them permanently.

After receiving his commission from President Harrison, Mr. Phelps retired to the enjoyment of his New Jersey home for a short time. During the summer he visited relatives in Pennsylvania and, with his daughter, spent some time at Bar Harbor, where Mr. Blaine and his family were staying. He spent a great deal of time in putting his business affairs in shape for a protracted absence and on September 7, 1889, he sailed for Europe on the steamer *Elbe*. For several days before he sailed Mr. Phelps was in constant receipt of letters and telegrams of congratulation and farewell from all over the land and a great many friends and relatives were at the pier to see him off. The new Minister arrived in Berlin on September 18th, and took rooms at the Kaiserhof. He took charge of the Legation the following day, and his first public function occurred on September 26th, when he presented his credentials to Emperor William, being introduced by Count Herbert Bismarck. The Emperor gave him a most cordial reception, and in response to Mr. Phelps's assurance that he would do his best to maintain and foster the friendly relations existing between Germany and the United States, the Emperor made some impromptu remarks that were widely quoted and commented upon at the time as being free from the stiffness usually accompanying such audiences and more cordial than might have been expected. He expressed pleasure at the appointment of Mr. Phelps, whose words of assurance gave him great gratification, and he did not doubt that Mr. Phelps would be successful in his endeavors to continue the good relations which had obtained between the two countries for over a century.

From my early youth [he said] I have been a great admirer of the mighty and growing commonwealth, which you represent, and the study of your history in peace and in war has always interested me very much. Of the many prominent qualities possessed by your countrymen it is especially their enterprise, their sense of order, and their inventive genius which direct the attention of the world to them. The Germans feel themselves so much the more attracted toward the people of the United States, as they are bound to the Americans through the many ties which the community of race produces. The most prominent feeling of these people is that of kin and of tried friendship and the future will only increase the heartiness of our relations.

The audience was extended far beyond the usual time of such functions so that Mr. Phelps and Count Bismarck missed the train by which they intended to return to Berlin. That evening Count Bismarck gave a dinner to Mr. Phelps, which was attended by the principal attachés of the United States Legation, and the other guests were the Italian Chargé d'Affaires, Marquis de Beccaria Incisa, the English Chargé d'Affaires, Mr. Beauclerk, the chief of the German navy, Admiral von der Goltz, General von Hanke, Chief of the Emperor's military cabinet, General Aide-de-Camp Count Wedel, Captain and Imperial Aide-de-Camp Baron von Senden, Baron von Alvensleben, Lieutenant von Below, Baron von Holstein, Count Kanitz, Professor von Gneist, and other distinguished gentlemen. Mr. Phelps took Countess William Bismarck, who acted as hostess, in to dinner.

This marked his reception into official life in Berlin and thereafter Mr. Phelps was a prominent figure at all the social events of the German Court and of high official Berlin circles. On October 11th he was presented to the German Empress at a gala performance at the Royal Opera House given in honor of the Czar of Russia. He was the only man in the brilliant assemblage who had neither color in his clothes nor gold upon his coat as he

was led to the foyer by Marechal de la Cour Count von Eulenburg. Three days later he was presented to Empress Frederick at her palace in Unter den Linden. These social distinctions and others of lesser note kept Mr. Phelps constantly before the public, both in Germany and the United States, and he very quickly got the reputation of being the most popular Minister America had ever sent to Berlin.

While he yielded much time to the demands of society, Mr. Phelps never for a moment neglected his official duties and all through his public career he was known as a hard worker. Although he entertained and was entertained a great deal, he was constantly at his desk during business hours and within a month after taking charge of the Legation he had practically mastered the routine work of his office. His first difficulty was in finding a suitable residence. Aided by the Foreign Office, his numerous friends at the Court and in the diplomatic corps, he searched through all the desirable parts of Berlin offering to pay any price asked for suitable quarters. He was temporarily located at the Kaiserhof in the suite of apartments once tenanted by Lord Rosebery and afterwards by Mr. Villard, the American railway magnate. He tried to rent the famous Borsig palace, built by the great German ironmaster but never occupied, and which had been sought in vain by the governments of France, England, Italy, and even Germany for official purposes. Mr. Phelps offered to pay a rent of $20,000 a year during the period of his residence in Berlin, but his offer met with the same polite refusal that had attended all previous efforts of the same kind. He finally secured a home in the large new building at the corner of Dorotheen and Neue Wilhelm Strasse and spent a small fortune in rebuilding, remodelling, and furnishing it according to his own tastes and those of Mrs. Phelps.

Mrs. Phelps left him in October and returned to America to make final preparations for her permanent removal

to Berlin. During the same month he received notice that Rutgers College in New Jersey had conferred upon him the degree of LL.D.

Early in November Count Schouvaloff, the Russian Ambassador in Berlin, gave a dinner in honor of Minister Phelps. During that month Mr. Phelps entertained Berlin society and American visitors with lavish hospitality, ending up with the magnificent Thanksgiving Day banquet, which was the greatest affair of its kind ever seen in Berlin. At that time the American colony in Berlin was not homogeneous and although they all celebrated Thanksgiving Day as the national holiday they were not united. The members of the so-called "American church" would have a celebration of their own, apart from the more aristocratic Episcopalians, who worshipped in the chapel of St. George. The ladies who had been brought up in the principles of strict temperance looked with horror upon those rollicking students who found no harm in a glass of foaming lager beer or the *bon vivantes* who dallied with the sparkling champagne. The dissensions caused war and disunion in the American camp. Minister Phelps in looking forward to the celebration of Thanksgiving Day saw this dissension and determined to bring about peace, union, and good fellowship among his countrymen. He called a meeting composed of men from all factions, old residents of Berlin and late arrivals, the millionaire and the poor student, the votary of religion and the worldling. With diplomatic tact Mr. Phelps reconciled the conflicting factions, and when the meeting adjourned, all had pledged themselves to a hearty support of the measures proposed. A great banquet, a concert by American musical students of talent, and a ball were to be given on Thanksgiving Day and all Americans were welcome. The price of admission was placed so low as to allow the poorest to attend. In order to meet the heavy expenses, which could not be covered by the admission fee, Mr. Phelps placed his purse at the

disposal of the two committeemen having this matter in charge, but in order to spare the feelings of the poorer students nothing of this was said to any one. Everybody was supposed to have contributed his full share of the expenses.

The dinner and the festivities following it were a great success. Never before had there been so large and so brilliant a party of Americans gathered in Berlin. Minister Phelps's popularity among the leading circles at Berlin induced men of such high standing as Count Herbert Bismarck and Prince Radziwill to grace the feast with their presence and their oratory. But the main result and the most important one was that thenceforth the Americans in Berlin kept a united front. They might differ in their personal views, but in their manifestations of public spirit and of national kinship they acted in unison thereafter. Nearly four hundred and fifty Americans sat down to that famous dinner in the great hall of the Kaiserhof. Minister Phelps presided. At his right sat Count Bismarck, at his left Prince Radziwill. At the right hand of Count Bismarck, Mrs. Phelps, who had returned from America a few days before, was seated. Miss Phelps sat by the side of Prince Radziwill.

In opening the proceedings Mr. Phelps said that it was the largest and most successful Thanksgiving ever held in Berlin and that was saying a great deal, as for twenty-five years they had the credit of giving a better Thanksgiving than any other American colony in Europe. His predecessors had vied with each other in the effort to break the record, considering that this achievement would be the greatest of their respective missions. In telling what they had to be thankful for, he said:

> We are thankful that we cherish here the traditions and virtues of our own country: simplicity, industry, cheerfulness, brotherly kindness, and morality. It is easy to cherish them here in Germany, because Germany cherishes the same virtues,

and the same traditions. That makes it easier for us to practise them and we do practise them. Five hundred young men pursue their education at school or at the university, who are neither deficient in spirit nor in youth; and not a story of disorder or crime reaches the Legation. Three hundred young women, young and—and in the presence of Mrs. Phelps I dare not say more, and in the presence of these specimens before me I cannot say less—young and not unattractive —pursue their studies here, go to the opera and theatre and concert, are largely without male protection; and yet, not a breath of scandal ever clouds the white mirror which reflects their honorable life. If you want another fact, go to the American chapel late and see if you can get a seat, or go to the Anglo-American church, and ask Mr. Earee to get you a sitting. In the sweetest modulation of his most comforting voice, he will have to tell you, "There will be no sitting, until we build our additions."

I will admit there are some drawbacks. We are living in Berlin and it is not yet a paradise. Sometimes there is scarcity of sunshine, there seems to be always a superfluity of police. But what are these to you? who in the fog and in the police station can comfort yourself with this thought! "We are here in person, we need to write no letters and to send no attorneys. We are here in person and can receipt on the spot for our share of the great fortune left us by our ancestor, who died in Pomerania in 1763, leaving many millions of dollars and not a single heir."

If we can have such a Thanksgiving here, what Thanksgiving ought our friends to have at home?

They will thank God—least of all, for that material prosperity which is a wonder of the century. It mocks all precedents and defies all description. They will thank God more, though, because every citizen can have a home—the only nation yet born into the world where a poor man can have one. They will thank God most of all, that in the midst of its material prosperity, in these prosperous homes, they still practise the virtues of their fathers. They prize education, they honor and practise industry, they love their country, they worship their God. Sixty millions in happy and comfortable

homes enjoying civil and religious freedom, all of them, and all of us—all our countrymen at home and abroad shall to-day, as they gather about their well spread board, give one glance to their country's happy present, to their country's wonderful future, and then gratefully and proudly say: "Thank God we are Americans!" Ladies and gentlemen, I propose the health of the President of the United States.

Count Bismarck responded to the toast of "The Emperor of Germany," and concluded by proposing the health of Mr. Phelps. Prince Radziwill to "The Ladies," ex-Consul-General Kreismann to "The Day we Celebrate," and Consul Hubbard to "The Consular Service." After the dinner Mrs. Phelps, assisted by a committee of ladies, held an informal reception, after which followed the ball.

Thanksgiving over, the usual routine of life was resumed. Mr. and Mrs. Phelps continued to reside at the Kaiserhof, receiving daily new social ceremonies. Christmas was kept with the usual ceremonies, nor were the poor forgotten. Naturally enough the numerous kind acts and benefactions of the United States Minister and his family were kept a secret, but two acts of charity out of a hundred unnoticed became known to the newspapers and were given publicity. On the 28th of December the Empress Augusta gave a special reception to Mr. Phelps in the presence of her full Court. Count Nesselrode, assisted by Baron von Ende, made the presentation. The Empress, in the course of her cordial conversation with Mr. Phelps, expressed her lifelong interest in American affairs and her great desire that the people of the United States should use their immense resources always in the interest of the peace of the world.

Mr. Phelps was now in the full tide of his official life at Berlin—popular and busy. While the newspapers of the day were constantly reporting public incidents and affairs with which he was connected they did not nor could they

show the daily routine through which he ploughed and by which he accomplished valuable service to his country and innumerable acts of kindness and courtesy to his fellow-citizens. This part of his duties required patient and energetic work and a practical knowledge of men. Not a day elapsed but some "military case," passport application, or other question of citizenship was brought to the notice of the minister, and Mr. Phelps gave them all careful attention and consideration. There were questions of all kinds from scientific, educational, charitable, and legal institutions at home requiring careful and frequently lengthy answers. Some college desired to obtain information as to certain new scientific processes or a library wrote to know about some rare books. Charitable institutions inquired about philanthropical work in Germany and legal institutions sought information on points of law. American inventors, merchants, railway men, and others of all kinds and all degrees of worthiness asked his aid in presenting their interests to the German Government and people. Students as well as agents of the different departments of the United States and the separate State governments came in large numbers to study the public institutions, the schools, the mines, the methods of government in Germany. For all of these permission had to be obtained from the German Government to visit the different institutions in their pursuit of knowledge.

The Minister standing *in loco parentis* to all Americans within his jurisdiction, to him come all his countrymen in trouble—the American who does not wish to submit to the tax laws of Germany, the American who has gotten into trouble through no fault of his own, and the American who has gotten into trouble through his own fault. Every American artist who wishes to make his or her début in Berlin, the Mecca of American musical students, went to the Legation for aid and encouragement. Many who were in financial difficulties called and great care and pains were taken to help all worthy cases. There were

also numerous auxiliary congresses of the World's Columbian Fair that called for information and advice and consumed much time.

Added to these strictly business matters were the social obligations of the Minister—obligations which in a city like Berlin, where so many eminent Americans congregate, were far from being light. The hospitality of the Legation, however, was not confined to prominent people alone. All Americans were welcome, and frequent entertainments were given to the whole American colony, a service not to be undervalued in a city where hundreds of American young men and women had a studious and lonely life. To these the opportunity for social intercourse under the care and protection of their Minister meant a great deal. It will thus be seen that the life of the American Minister at Berlin was far removed from the butterfly existence which such missions are sometimes thought to be. On the contrary, if understood and carried out, as Mr. Phelps did understand and practise it, the work of the Legation was exacting and important. The attention and patronage he gave to American students of talent caused his fame to spread in these circles, and the numbers of such students increased by hundreds during his stay in Berlin. His high social standing and his friendship with the best families of the German nobility attracted a great many wealthy Americans who were travelling in Europe to Berlin, so that the American colony within a year or so after his appointment was multiplied many times in numbers and Berlin became a popular stopping-place for all American travellers.

Repeatedly during the year 1890 there appeared reports in the newspapers that Mr. Phelps contemplated resigning his post at Berlin in order to return and re-enter New Jersey politics. These reports, it is believed, were the outcome of the fears of his political foes, because as a matter of fact there was no truth in them. Some of these reports had it that he intended to re-enter Congress

as a member of the Lower House, while others said he wanted to become Senator from New Jersey. There was even another rumor that Secretary Blaine was about to retire and that Mr. Phelps was to become Secretary of State. However lacking in fact these reports were, they caused a great deal of speculation in his native State and considerable uneasiness among certain politicians who had nothing to gain by the presence of the German Minister.

The social season in Berlin in 1890 was a short one owing to the death of Empress Augusta. Mr. and Mrs. Phelps attended the grand Cour held on New Year's Day by the Emperor and Empress and a brilliant dinner given by the Count and Countess Waldersee, the object of which was to bring together the families of Field Marshal von Moltke and Minister Phelps. Mrs. Phelps had issued invitations for a large dinner which was to open relations between American and other circles but she had to withdraw them on account of the death of the Empress Augusta.

At the reception given by the Young Men's League of the American church to all the English-speaking young men studying in Berlin, Mr. Phelps made a speech in which he referred in the most feeling terms to the late Empress whose last function was her reception to him on Saturday afternoon before New Year's Day. He spoke of her love of peace, which seemed to be uppermost in her mind all the time, and of her behest to him that he would promote the friendship between her country and his own, ending with, "And you will not forget that I have the peace of the world at heart."

A day or two afterward [continued Mr. Phelps], my mind still full of the earnest, pleading tones in which she had spoken, I met in print an account of an interview which Bayard Taylor had had with the Empress Augusta in 1878. It seemed that the Empress had been forced by the illness of the Emperor to take his place in the interview. And to my delight I found that she had expressed to Mr. Taylor twelve years before—not as her sentiments, as words from her husband—almost identical

wishes. The duty her husband taught her, she was following to the end—the duty of brotherly love and kindness—the things that make for peace.

The Empress said to the Countess von Hacke, "I have only one desire, and that is, that people will say of me when I am dead, 'She was a good woman.'"

She has her wish. When the purple standard dropped on the palace roof, the faithful watchers in the street wept—not for an Empress, but for a good woman. The wires told her death in every capital and the echo that came back was of universal sorrow. Not for the consort of a Prince, a King, and an Emperor, but for a good woman, who was dead.

Mr. and Mrs. Phelps viewed the solemn pageant of the funeral from the Hotel Royal, which offered a commanding view of the great procession, and they had as guests at their window Mrs. Carpenter, Mr. and M. Ghika, the Servian Minister, Mr. von Pavlovitsch, Professor and Mrs. Leyden, Dr. Krauel, of the Foreign Office, and Mrs. Krauel, Mr. Coleman, Mr. Crosby, and others.

All formal social functions were suspended for a time in Berlin, but Mr. and Mrs. Phelps generally had two or three guests at their table. Among those who were occasionally seen at their board during the season of mourning were Ceremonienmeister von Usedom, Mr. Kirchenius, of the Siamese Legation, Mr. French, First Secretary of the British Legation, Count Bismarck, Baron von Wangenheim, Count Murawieff, the Russian Chargé d' Affaires, Paul von Below, Baron von Eckertstein. During this season the American Minister had private audiences with Prince Alexander and Prince George of Prussia, cousins of the late Emperor Frederick, and they exhibited great cordiality toward Mr. Phelps and spoke pleasantly of their friendship with several Americans. In February Miss Bowler of Cincinnati, a niece of the late Minister Pendleton, was married to Mr. John Livingston of New York, in Berlin, and Mr. Phelps acted as one of the witnesses.

CHAPTER XXIII

The Phelps Home in Berlin—Mr. and Mrs. Phelps Dine with the German Chancellor—Fall of Bismarck—Intimate Friendship of the Iron Chancellor and the American Minister—Begins the Struggle for the Introduction of American Pork into Germany—American Rifle Teams in Germany—International Medical Conference—Fourth of July Celebrated at the Kaiserhof—The American Minister Presides and Makes a Notable Speech—A Trip Home Creates a Political Sensation—Newspaper Interviews—Speech on Irish Home Rule in Paterson—Visits His Ancestral Home in Connecticut—A Reception by the Union League Club of Hudson County—Interview with President Harrison and Secretary Blaine—Given Dinner at the Union League Club, New York—Returns to Berlin

MR. PHELPS and his family moved into their new home at the beginning of the month of February and Mr. and Mrs. Phelps gave a reception there on February 6th. It was described at the time as one of the largest gatherings of Americans that had occurred in Europe for a long time and they all admired the palatial interior of the new residence at the corner of Dorotheen and Neue Wilhelm Strasse. It was a revelation to the many notable Germans who also attended the reception and who for the first time saw an ideal "American home" in the German capital. The wealthy American Minister had spared no expense to provide a private house suitable for his lavish hospitality. What had formerly been stores on the ground floor had been ripped out and converted into a great kitchen and dwelling rooms for the servants. The second floor, which had eight windows on each street, was arranged for state reception rooms and dwelling rooms. The third floor was used for domestic purposes.

To bring all these rooms into easy communication another store on New Wilhelm Street was converted into a second vestibule and stairway. The ladies of the family carried out their own idea in making the rooms inhabitable and agreeable, and it was no light task for the Berlin decorators to follow their views, although they afterward acknowledged the effect to be charming. No dust and darkness collectors were allowed. Throughout the second floor all the doors were removed so that an unobstructed view through the entire suite of rooms was given. Alcoves and arches marked the divisions of the rooms and light-colored draperies and curtains furnished the windows. The walls were hung with beautiful pictures and etchings. The floor was covered with wooden mosaic and the ballroom was the wonder of the German nobility. The patriotism of the Minister was manifested by a thirty-six foot American flag in the main vestibule of the house. There was one picture in the house which Mr. Phelps prized very highly and to which he frequently called the attention of his visitors. It represented the scene in the Parliament Court when the ill-fated Charles I. of England was tried and condemned. John Phelps, the ancestor of the American Minister, was clerk of the court and he appears in the picture sitting at his desk, with the king, as prisoner, sitting in front of him. Prince Bismarck had the pleasure of viewing the picture, but his comments on the court of regicides have not been preserved.

At this time the Samoa treaty was ratified by the United States Senate and this gave Mr. Phelps great satisfaction. When the news reached Berlin, Count Herbert Bismarck called upon Minister Phelps at the American Legation before office hours to offer his congratulations, and Minister Phelps and his wife were invited to dinner by Prince Bismarck to make the acquaintance of the family and to drink a glass of Rhenish wine over the settlement of the Samoan troubles. The dinner hour was an early one and the only person present exclusive of

the family and Mr. and Mrs. Phelps was Dr. Schwenninger. After dinner they went to the library and the Chancellor lighted his long pipe and sent for some whiskey which, he said, was a recent gift from a friend in the United States. The Chancellor then proposed, and all drank, the health of the President of the United States.

One of the notable events of the month of March was a dinner given to the Honorable Charles Emory Smith and Mrs. Smith, who were the guests of Minister Phelps during their brief stay in Berlin on their way to St. Petersburg. Mr. Smith had just been appointed American Minister to Russia.

Prince Bismarck resigned the German Chancellorship in March, 1890, and retired to his country estate, Friederichsruhe. There was a complete breach between the Emperor and the great Chancellor, and it was a perilous undertaking to give proofs of friendship to the retiring statesman. Minister Phelps, however, had contracted such an intimate friendship with Bismarck that he was one of the few manly spirits who did not fear the royal displeasure. He was one of the last guests at the Bismarck palace, and accompanied the ex-Chancellor to the railway station upon his dramatic departure from Berlin. Wearing the uniform of the cuirassiers, Prince Bismarck left his palace at 5 P.M. and entered an open carriage that stood in waiting. As soon as he appeared he was greeted with stormy enthusiasm. The windows of the houses in the vicinity were crowded with spectators. The entire route was a sea of waving handkerchiefs. The crowd was so dense that the ex-Chancellor's horses were compelled to walk the entire distance from the palace to the station. There was a continuous roar of cheering. Following the Prince's carriage came another carriage occupied by Princess Bismarck and other members of the family. A third carriage was filled with members of the American Legation. A number of other carriages filled with friends and admirers of the Prince closed the procession. At the railway station

great heaps of bouquets for the Prince and Princess were piled in the waiting-rooms. Prince Bismarck bade all farewell, Mr. Phelps and Chancellor von Caprivi being among the last to shake hands with him.

The American Minister exercised his great diplomatic tact in this crisis, and so well discerned the dividing line between his personal friendship for the greatest statesman of the time and the duty of his high diplomatic position to abstain from every interference with the internal policy of the country to which he was accredited, that the German Emperor, so sensitive on such points, could find no fault. While Mr. Phelps still maintained his personal intimacy and warm friendship with the great Bismarck, now fallen into disfavor, yet the high regard in which Mr. Phelps was held at the German Court was not only maintained but, if possible, increased by his manly and dignified attitude in this critical affair. With Bismarck's successor, Von Caprivi, Mr. Phelps enjoyed the most pleasant relations, and so far as American interests were concerned the great change in the German administration had no appreciable effect.

It was about this time that Mr. Phelps began his active campaign for the admission of American pork into Germany. That nation had, without good reason, excluded that class of American food products, and some years before the then American Minister to Germany caused considerable stir and excitement by his efforts to force Germany to admit this article of food. Such an attempt to bully Bismarck into a repeal of the obnoxious restrictions very naturally failed. Mr. Phelps adopted an entirely different course. He took advantage of the oft expressed desire of Germany to cultivate the friendship of the United States, and broached the subject of an abrogation of the restrictive laws against American meats and lard in a quiet and friendly spirit. It was well known that there was a great market for certain kinds of American food products in Germany, and the only obstacle was

the legal barrier erected by the German Chancellor as an economic measure. When Mr. Phelps took the matter up he found that there was a growing sentiment in Germany in favor of the removal of these restrictions, as it was felt that Germany must be fed in part from other countries. He met the greatest opposition from the great landed gentry of Germany and the smaller fry of Agrarians based on the well-known policy of Bismarck. Against these factors Mr. Phelps engaged all his diplomatic tact and strength of persistency. Gently and imperceptibly over the dinner-table, at a friendly game of whist, anywhere and everywhere friends were made and the hostile feeling removed, while in the Reichstag the opposition, among whose members Minister Phelps also had many warm friends, made motion after motion for the repeal of the obnoxious pork ordinance. In this way, little by little, the power of resistance became weakened, but it was a long and trying struggle for two years before he finally swept away the prohibitory laws, and as Mr. Phelps wittily expressed it, the American pig "marched in triumph through the Brandenburger Gate." His first public efforts in this campaign were occasioned by the refusal to admit Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show, which comprised a number of buffaloes that fell within the prohibition against the importation of American cattle. Of course this was a mere enforcement of the letter of the law, occasioning a great deal of levity at the time, and Mr. Phelps quickly obtained the necessary permission for the admission of the show cattle, and it proved to be a somewhat happy manner for Mr. Phelps to break the ice.

An excellent opportunity for the display of the friendly relations existing between Germany and the United States was given during the summer of 1890 when the American rifle teams visited Germany and took part in the great Deutsches Bundes Schützenfest. The German-American rifle clubs entered Berlin in formal procession on July 3d and were greeted by Minister Phelps. A great Fourth

of July dinner was given at the Kaiserhof with Mr. Phelps presiding. He made an eloquent speech to the toast of, "The Day We Celebrate and the President of the United States." After the usual felicitations on the day and a eulogy of the President, Mr. Phelps spoke at length on the advantages of travel and the return to be obtained from the money spent in that way. He said that American travellers spent $150,000,000 in Europe every year, and some critics had remarked that they had nothing to show for it, but Mr. Phelps was of the opinion that the traveller could take more from Germany alone than was enough to pay his part of that great expenditure, and then he depicted German family life and the manner in which the German takes his pleasure as an object-lesson well worth observing, concluding thus:

As for recreation—which we Americans need more of and spend more for than any other people—he sees the German get more for a mark than we for a dollar. Why? Because we insist that our entertainments shall be expensive. And because they are expensive many of us must content ourselves with few. But our traveller, looking around him, sees the German always amusing himself. He can, for he takes all he can get, however inexpensive and however simple. If he cannot hear Patti he won't refuse the delight of song—at the worst he will sing himself. If he can't hear Strauss he won't turn his back on humbler orchestras. And here in Berlin, if all else fails him, he pays five pfennige for his chair across the way in our "Wilhelm Platz," happy as a king because he can look at the Radziwill Palace, where his great Bismarck once lived. With such lessons might we not return more genial friends and more cheerful citizens?

What may not the American traveller learn in a score of directions, where we are lacking?—of an economy, which he sees here everywhere practised and respected; of a love for the open air so strong that a German prefers to do everything in it, except to die; of a love for art and nature, painting, sculpture, and music, and sky and tree and river and mountain,

which gives as much happiness to the pauper as to the prince.

All unseen of inspector or statistician, you may carry inside of Sandy Hook, when you go home, gentlemen, this priceless invoice—a larger respect for personal virtues, like simplicity, economy, cheerfulness, new views of the charm and extent of family intercourse, and a wider recognition of the ministry of art; all motives to make you struggle in the interests of the man against our overwhelming material prosperity. So with good heart and conscience let us enjoy to the full this foreign outing. It is happiness for us, and we will make it profitable for the land we love.

God bless the United States, our country! We love it so much, we would have it perfect.

This speech was widely quoted and commented upon in the German and American papers, most of which agreed with the philosophy and the economic theory expressed by the Minister, and the extensive publicity given to the speech showed the weight attached to the public utterances of Mr. Phelps.

The Minister continued to work indefatigably, attending to the routine duties of his office, making new friends and strengthening in many ways the ramifications of his many diplomatic projects. Before the social season had closed, Mrs. Phelps had been presented to the Prince of Wales at a state concern; Mr. Phelps had given a dinner to Count Herbert Bismarck, another to Count Pappenheim on the occasion of his departure to America to attend the marriage of his elder brother to Miss Wheeler of Philadelphia, a banquet to Henry M. Stanley the African explorer, and still another to Chancellor Caprivi. At the opening of the Reichstag the Emperor took occasion to praise Mr. Phelps privately and to say that he prized his acquaintance. He succeeded in getting the German Government to act with the United States in establishing post-offices on the trans-Atlantic steamers of the German lines, thereby securing a delivery of the mails

from twelve to twenty-four hours quicker than theretofore. The United States postal authorities had endeavored to get England and France to enter into a similar arrangement, but failed at that time.

Mr. Phelps rendered material service to his countrymen who attended the Tenth International Medical Congress in Berlin in August of that year. Over six hundred American physicians and surgeons, many of them men of high standing in their profession, some of them famous the world over, attended the congress. The Minister extended to them his princely hospitality. He saw that all their wants were supplied and that they gained admittance everywhere. At the congress the Americans were the lions of the day, and, while this success was due to some extent to their great scientific attainments, the popularity of Mr. Phelps among the scholarly classes of Germany had much to do with the warm reception given to his countrymen. For his services and sympathy he received a letter of thanks from Professor Virchow, the great pathologist, who was president of the congress.

In September, 1890, it was learned from the American Legation that the American Minister intended to go home on a vacation. At once all the American newspaper correspondents in Berlin were on the alert. The New York *Herald* representative obtained an interview which was published in that journal and in part was this:

Yes, I am going home for as long a leave as the Department will grant me. I think I deserve it, for I have n't been away from my post for a year and have been tolerably busy, for there have been three conventions, any one of which would have been enough for a year of old in Berlin—the Schuetzenfest, the Medical Congress, and the Consular Conference, which was adjourned after a fruitful and pleasant session. I shall not have anything to do with politics except to vote.

You ask what is the prospect of American pork getting into Germany. Good, I think. Germany resents anything like menace. She can generally be coaxed into anything that is

right, but not driven into anything. Bismarck out, or Bismarck in, Germany does not change in that respect. The German Empire is a large body, and moves slowly; but I 'm not discouraged, for it moves itself in the right direction, and about as rapidly as the different business interests connected with the pork industry can stand and adapt themselves to the change. I see by the newspapers here that the German municipalities and business interests one after another fall into line to bombard the Chancellor, and their facts are hot shot.

I see that Representative Ritter, in his famous speech on der deutsche Kaiser, gives great prominence to your epithet, "poor man's emperor."

Well [replied Mr. Phelps], it was true, and there was no reason why I should n't call him so. There is n't an utterance nor an act of that young sovereign that does not respond quickly to this test—his love and care of that class of his subjects who most need help.

On September 23d, the German steamship *Elbe* sailed into New York harbor, elaborately and gaily decked with flags of all colors, and presented a most beautiful sight. The decoration was in honor of the American Minister to Germany, who, with Mrs. Phelps, was a passenger. The newspaper reporters, intent upon interviewing the Minister, had boarded the ship down the bay, and a half-score more were awaiting his landing, where he was met at the pier by his daughter and several personal friends. To the inquiries of the reporters he said:

I have come home to rest and enjoy myself. I intend to spend my vacation upon my Teaneck farm. I feel as if I were already a Jersey farmer again. See, there is one of my farm wagons on the pier, ready to take off my luggage, and those lusty-looking fellows have come down fresh from Teaneck to give me an early welcome. I expect to live among the trees until I get rested, and then hunt up my friends to see that they have not forgotten me. No politics this time, only that I shall vote the Republican ticket in Bergen County at the coming election, and soon after return to my official duties at Berlin.

Mr. Phelps and his party were then seated in their own landau and quickly driven out over the Hudson and Bergen County hills and along roads lined with the golden-rod and purple autumnal flowers, which never look more beautiful than when one returns from a long absence abroad. Just as night was falling, the returned diplomatist passed the vine-clad ruins of his former celebrated mansion and entered once more his Bergen County home, from which he had been absent more than twelve months.

Notwithstanding Mr. Phelps's positive disclaimer that his visit was intended to have no political significance whatever, his arrival enlivened the newspapers throughout the country with rumors, conjectures, and predictions. The old cuts were brought out from the printing offices, his portrait appeared in hundreds of publications, and of the headings that were daily seen in the newspapers, these are a small sample: "Phelps the Centre of Political Attraction"; "Anxious for Phelps"; "Phelps's Influence Needed in Congress"; "Must Put on the War Paint in his Old District"; "All Parties would Welcome him to his Old Seat in Congress"; "Will Be the Republican Leader in the Next Congress." The Governorship and the United States Senatorship were also suggested. While all these allusions may have been very flattering, they had not the slightest influence in diverting the German Minister from his purpose to return at the end of his vacation to finish his work at Berlin.

During his short stay in this country he received much social and political attention. In October he was given a great reception by the Union League Club of Hudson County, at which were present many of the distinguished men of New Jersey, Senators, Congressmen, Judges, ex-Senators and ex-Governors, and prominent party leaders. After warm personal greetings, in response to formal introductory remarks, the guest of the evening made a graceful speech, giving as an excuse for avoiding all

politics that many of his Democratic friends were present.

A great public meeting was held in Paterson to promote the cause of "Home Rule" in Ireland, at which Governor Green and other leading men of the State were speakers. The audience seemed to be looking to Mr. Phelps for the main speech, and he did not disappoint them. He made a strong argument, showing why it was right that Ireland should govern itself in home matters. He claimed that international law now claimed the right of self-government to any community that was distinctly separated from others by race, situation, or creed. He claimed that the insular situation of Ireland, its Celtic blood, if not its religious faith, made self-government not only a right, but a necessity. What Ireland demanded was Irish law, not English law. In the course of his remarks he said:

Irishmen do not ask for national independence. That cry was of the olden times. They see that no new nation, however valorous, is able to step into the map of Europe nowadays, and stay there, unless mighty in size and resources. Europe is a series of armed camps, and neutral independence is secure only to those who have large ones. What could Ireland do as a nation against Germany, or France, or Russia, or even, in the event of quarrel, against Great Britain herself? But besides, even if Irishmen see a possibility of separate national existence, they do not want it. They know what Ireland has contributed in the past to Great Britain. They know that the treasures of that great Empire, the accumulations of centuries, are largely the result of Irish effort and belong in part to them. Why should they surrender this magnificent heritage? Why should they give their share of British glory to their associates? The eloquence of Sheridan, the learning of Burke, the wit of Swift, the lyres of Goldsmith and Moore; aye! the swords of Nelson and Wellington are but suggestions of what Ireland gave to Great Britain. And she does not purpose to leave that great Empire, which her children have so largely helped to develop and adorn. Ireland purposes to

stay in the Empire to which she belongs and in it to have her rights.

In October Mr. Phelps made a brief visit to the State of Connecticut, and spent a few days at the old Phelps home at Simsbury, and while there made a flying trip to Hartford. Here, as usual, he did not escape the attention of the ubiquitous newspaper reporters, and in an interview he told that he had an ancestral interest in that city because when his father was a poor boy he walked there and obtained employment, and there got his start in life. He spoke of the many friends that he had himself made in that city, and of its prosperity and growth, and of the sterling qualities of its citizens, saying that his recollection of Hartford and its vicinity had given the whole State of Connecticut an interest to him. In reply to a question he responded:

I have found life in Berlin especially enjoyable because of the great similarity both in taste and manners between the Germans and the New England folk to which I belong. The people are simple, intelligent, industrious, and without pretence. The absence of all extravagance and the simplicity with which Germans of the highest rank live are characteristic of them as of our best New England people.

The annual banquet of the Chamber of Commerce of the State of New York was on November 19th. The Chairman of the Committee of Arrangements for that brilliant affair received this letter:

Dear Sir:

It is with great regret that I find my engagements compel me to decline the honor you offer me of meeting you and your associates of the Chamber of Commerce at their annual dinner this year.

I have not only great pride in the good work and name of your historic institution, but a tender feeling in the thought of the many old members, friends of my father and myself, whose

number makes your portrait gallery seem to me almost as a private collection of my own.

I would like to dwell upon their virtues, except that they would suggest how little I had profited by their splendid example.

Truly yours,

WILLIAM WALTER PHELPS.

At this date, the New York *World* published the report of a little incident which is worthy of preservation because it shows so pleasantly one of Mr. Phelps's marked characteristics—a willingness always to do something for the comfort and welfare of others. The account read:

Seated at a table in the dining-room of the Downtown Club Saturday was a good-looking man of medium stature, with a bronze face and a moustache tinged with gray. These points are not so distinctive as to make recognition of a gentleman lunching at the Downtown Club general. But this particular gentleman wore a red necktie, and of course everybody knew at once that he was William Walter Phelps, United States Minister to Germany. His lunch was interrupted frequently by the necessity of shaking hands with a large number of acquaintances, but the fact that he is in reality an Envoy Extraordinary was not fully brought out until a distinguished-looking stranger, apparently a Southerner and certainly one-armed, approached. He informed Mr. Phelps that he was a South Carolinian, just elected to Congress, and that his family was in Dresden. He had expected to go over to spend Christmas, but business would not permit. Did Mr. Phelps know anybody in Dresden who might feel inclined to relieve the tedium necessarily experienced by a strange American family? Mr. Phelps did. He knew the whole American colony, and would see that it took the strangers in.

"Moreover," said he, "if you will send me the name and address of your wife, I will ask Consul Palmer to call and extend any courtesy possible. And please write to your wife that if she or any of her family fall ill to telegraph me at Berlin and Mrs. Phelps will run down to Dresden and look after her."

The newly-elected Congressman's eyes lighted and he expressed his thanks in the heartiest manner possible. When he had gone, a friend asked the Minister to Germany if that were not an unusual case.

"Why, not at all," was the reply. "I am responsible for all good Americans, am I not? It is my duty to make life as pleasant for them as I can, and if they fall ill it is my duty to see that they are cured. Of course it is, and that is one of the things I have been trying to do. And, you know," he added, with a twinkle in his eye, "I never enjoyed any work so much in my life."

The Minister, before his return to Germany, had several interviews with President Harrison at Washington, and he accompanied Secretary Blaine on a trip to Chicago, which was wholly of a social character.

On the eve of the departure of Mr. Phelps for Europe in December, thirty of his friends, all men of high distinction, gave him a dinner at the Union League Club in New York. He sailed on the steamship *Werra*, on December 6th, accompanied by his daughter, Miss Marian Phelps. Upon his arrival in Berlin, Mr. Phelps resumed his diplomatic duties, and at the same time opened the social season with great splendor.

CHAPTER XXIV

Koch's Lymph—Phelps's Social Fame in Germany—Hoyt Extradition Case—Chicago World's Fair—Takes the Homburg Water Treatment, and Meets the Prince of Wales

THE Minister, upon his return, found himself overwhelmed with applications for "Koch lymph." The famous bacteriologist had just published his discovery of a remedy supposed to be a sure cure for phthisis, and from all parts of the globe flocked physicians and patients to Germany. The excitement at Berlin, the rush of seekers after health, and of those who sought wealth by possession of the famous "tuberculine," was almost as mad and exciting as the historical rush for the gold fields of California. Professor Koch, not yet confident of the value of his discovery, fearful of intrusting it to inexperienced hands, was unapproachable. The medicine itself was manufactured in small quantities, scarcely sufficient for the demand of the Berlin hospitals. Sums as high as $2000 and more were in vain offered for a single vial, the original price of which was $6, yet Minister Phelps, the moment he arrived in Berlin, secured an interview with Professor Koch and managed to secure an arrangement for supplies of lymph to American hospitals and medical institutions. The American physicians, who bore the necessary credentials, were quickly supplied, and long before any other foreign nation America tested the value of the German discovery. It was peculiarly flattering to the national pride of American physicians who went to Berlin, to witness the popularity and great personal

influence of their Minister. On the steamer *Werra*, which took over Mr. Phelps, were a number of American physicians all anxious to study the new remedy. They knew that it was almost impossible to reach the famous professor or to procure any of the fluid. Mr. Phelps came to their assistance, and when they landed in Bremen he telegraphed to Professor Koch asking him to find some method by which American physicians could be accommodated. The great savant at once replied, expressing his willingness to call upon Mr. Phelps and discuss the matter with him. Professor Koch, who refused to see even crowned heads because his time was so completely occupied by his investigations, found time to call upon Minister Phelps and to make the arrangement already mentioned. Mr. Phelps thus secured what all other foreign ministers and even high German authorities had failed to do.

The social season of 1890–91 was an unusually brilliant one at the American Legation. Not a day passed without its great luncheon, ball, or other festivity. On Thursday, the regular reception day, all Americans in Berlin were welcome and made to feel at home. More than five hundred cards were left for Minister Phelps at the Christmas reception. Mrs. Phelps remained in America to look after the building operations at Teaneck and the hospitality of the Legation was under the charge of Miss Phelps, with her cousin, Miss Boardman. Mrs. Phelps arrived in Berlin at the end of January, and a brilliant ball was given at the Legation in honor of her return. Toward the end of February she gave a grand reception, those invited being mostly Americans and it was by far the most distinguished gathering of Americans in Berlin. It marked the great transition which had been effected by Mr. Phelps and his family in one short year. Previous to his appointment, American society in Berlin was composed almost entirely of students, and although this serious element continued to increase, a great many

gay American butterflies of fashion had settled in Berlin, attracted by the cordial welcome which our Minister and his gracious wife extended to all their countrymen and countrywomen, and by the increased social life which had thus been brought into the colony. So great was the social fame of the Phelpses and so much were they mentioned in the newspapers that an American journalist with more imagination than veracity perpetrated a gross fake on his paper by wiring a story from Berlin that Minister Phelps had appeared at the "Schleppen cour" in regulation court costume instead of the traditional dress-suit of American diplomacy. This story was widely circulated, accompanied with cartoons, and commented upon until it was shown to be entirely without foundation.

This was probably the most active period of Mr. Phelps's life in Berlin. Looking over the field of his operations, one wonders at the ceaseless energy of a man who was so delicate physically. The tireless activity he displayed has come to be known as the "strenuous life," but no such robust name would be applied to the polished labors of the American Minister who always employed the art which conceals art. He undoubtedly overtaxed his strength and incurred an illness which required a surgical operation in June, 1891. He was confined to his bed for a time, but soon rallied sufficiently to sit up and attend to his official business. The Legation work was carried on by him through this period as if he were perfectly well.

It was at this time that the Hoyt extradition case arose and prompted Mr. Phelps to seek the enactment of a new extradition treaty between Germany and the United States. True W. Hoyt, the New York agent of the Incandescent Gas-Light Company of Philadelphia embezzled $1000 belonging to the company and escaped from New York on the German steamer *Normannia*. He was indicted and the State Department sought to have him arrested at Southampton on the arrival of the steamer

there, his crime being extraditable by America's treaty with England but not by its treaty with Germany. When the officers tried to board the steamer at Southampton they were prevented by the steamer's captain. Germany had always refused to accept the almost universal rule of international law that a merchant ship is amenable to the police regulations at the ports she visits. In nearly all of her treaties with other governments Germany insisted that her merchant vessels should be considered her territory in the same manner as if they were on the high seas. Hoyt was carried to Hamburg and held there for a time pending the efforts of Mr. Phelps to have him extradited, but he was finally released as nothing could be done under the existing treaty. The case aroused much indignation in America, and although Mr. Phelps had to drop the matter for the time being owing to the pressure of more important business, he took it up later and succeeded in having the extradition treaty revised in a manner satisfactory to both nations at the time.

The warmest personal relations continued between Prince Bismarck and Mr. Phelps, who had a natural liking for each other, and on the birthday of the old statesman, April 1, 1891, he received from the friendly American diplomat this telegram:

> I want to remind you that millions of your countrymen and of my countrymen are thinking of you to-day with admiration and affection.

To this greeting he received from Prince Bismarck the reply:

> Many thanks for your kind words and friendly reminiscence.

Mrs. Phelps spent the summer vacation in 1891 in Carlsbad, where she took the waters with Mrs. John Wanamaker. Mr. Phelps remained in Berlin, assisting

the Chicago World's Fair Commission in obtaining from Germany a representative exhibit of that great nation's manufactures and products. The German officials were at first reluctant to go to any great expense in the matter, but Mr. Phelps used his personal influence and enthused the officials in power and aroused the self-interest and national pride of German manufacturers so that the Fair commission was eminently successful in Germany. The Minister tried to induce Herr Krupp to exhibit his guns at Chicago, but the famous ordnance manufacturer said it would cost him a quarter of a million dollars for the transportation and exhibition, and the idea had to be abandoned. As soon as he had accomplished this work, Mr. Phelps and Miss Phelps left Berlin for Homburg, where he took the famous treatment of the waters. There he met the renowned men and women of two continents, the chief of whom was the Prince of Wales. The days were spent in taking the waters of the famous Spa, and the evenings in social festivities. Yet business was not neglected during the gayeties of Homburg. Minister Phelps was in constant communication with the office of the Legation in Berlin, the Department of State at Washington, and the Foreign Office at Berlin. It was during his stay at Homburg that he realized the greatest accomplishment of his mission—the introduction of American pork into Germany.

CHAPTER XXV

American Pork—Grand Official Dinners with Homely American Products on the Table—Persistent Work by Phelps Wins Success, but the Closing Negotiations Taken from Him—Newspaper Canards—Another Trip to Egypt—Relinquishes His Office to His Democratic Successor—Appointed Judge of New Jersey Court of Errors and Appeals

AS already mentioned, Mr. Phelps had begun the negotiations in behalf of American meat interest almost at the very outset of his Berlin career, and he never ceased in his efforts until he had accomplished his purpose, and this most national achievement of his mission was hailed in America as a great victory of his diplomacy. What before had been denied when sought by bluster, had now been gained by suavity and firmness. The year 1891 brought a combination of circumstances especially favorable to the Minister's plans. The reciprocity policy of Secretary Blaine, the clause of the McKinley Tariff Bill empowering the President to take retaliatory measures against any foreign government which should discriminate against American products, and the agitation in the German Reichstag and press for a repeal of the pork ordinances—all these factors combined to give Mr. Phelps a good opportunity to consummate the negotiations. The German Government as early as April, 1891, conveyed to Mr. Phelps the intimation that the obnoxious pork decrees were soon to be repealed. In the meantime, early in March, Minister Phelps had succeeded in bringing about a modification of the stringent law regarding the importation of American cattle into Germany. Thereto-

fore cattle thus imported had to undergo a four weeks' quarantine. The cost of feeding the cattle during so long a period made the quarantine law practically prohibitive. The first concession was the removal of this quarantine and the establishment of model abattoirs at Hamburg where the cattle were killed immediately on landing and shipped in refrigerator cars to all parts of Germany. This naturally brought about a large increase in the exportation of American cattle, thus greatly benefiting American farmers and cattlemen. One of Mr. Phelps's artful arguments in this campaign was a series of dinners to high German officials to whom he served American beef in the most tasty and tempting forms, thus putting into practical and successful operation the very old adage regarding the proximity of a man's stomach and his good will.

This accomplished, Mr. Phelps continued his efforts for the removal of the embargo on pork, and he worked steadily at it all summer, and the German Government opposition gradually weakened before the popular sentiment which the American Minister had fomented in the Fatherland. One of the aids of the settlement of the difficulty was the establishment of a meat inspection by the United States Government—not indeed because the German Government believed in the thoroughness of the inspection, for trichinæ had been frequently found in certified American pork, so that Germany was compelled to prescribe a re-inspection, but because this inspection gave Germany an opportunity to retire gracefully from her position which Minister Phelps by his diplomacy and the logic of his arguments had made untenable.

Strange to say, at the very end of the negotiation, and when Mr. Phelps had practically succeeded, the final proceedings were taken out of his hands by his own Government and the negotiations were transferred to a conference held at Saratoga. The German statesmen who had charge of this affair were elated at the change. These disciples

of Bismarck knew that Minister Phelps held the trump cards and that in dealing with him they were at a disadvantage. They could only gain by a change in the field of operations. Nor were they mistaken. America had given to Germany free sugar—a present of some $16,000,000—in return for the re-admission of pork, which Mr. Phelps had practically made a *fait accompli* before the Saratoga convention, and for reductions of the duty on cereals equal to that granted in the recent commercial treaties between Germany, Austria, and other countries of Europe, while as a matter of fact that reduction belonged to America by treaty right and there was no need of buying it by reciprocal concessions. This treaty right is contained in the "most favored nations" clause of the treaty of 1828. Had the consummation of the negotiations been left in the hands of Mr. Phelps, it is safe to say that the re-admission of pork would have been obtained without any concession on the part of the United States. Mr. Phelps knew that the German Government had virtually decided upon the concession because of the favorable sentiment among the German people. Why the final negotiations were taken out of his hands has never been explained. In the newspapers of that time there was evidence that Secretary Rusk desired to take from Mr. Phelps the credit due to him for his great work in this affair, and it is a fact that in all the Secretary's statements on the subject no mention of Minister Phelps was made.

American public opinion, however, was not mistaken as to where the credit properly belonged for the re-admission of the American pig into Germany. Indeed, the only name mentioned in connection with the matter was that of Minister Phelps. The popular verdict was that to Mr. Phelps belonged the credit of having settled the pork question. Not only was this so in America, but the same opinion prevailed in Germany. He received many letters of congratulation from public men and friends, and

votes of thanks from many corporations and public boards interested financially in the result.

As soon as the pork question was settled Minister Phelps set about preparing the ground for the introduction of American corn into Germany. He adopted his former tactics of serving it at his table to the German officials who partook of his hospitality. It was said at the time that the German notabilities were delighted with the gastronomic pleasures of American cornbread and bacon as supplied by a cook who could not be surpassed in Virginia in the art of making cornbread toothsome. Dr. Miguel was reported as having praised both the bacon and the cornbread, and declared that thereafter they would be among the supplies at his table, and that the duties on corn would soon be removed. Mr. Phelps's idea was to have Indian meal introduced as a part of the supplies for the German army and thus at once open up a great market for it. The German War Department made a number of experiments with American corn, and a favorable report was made. The department decided to introduce it into the rations of the German soldier.

Although very little was said at the time about the difficulties experienced by the Standard Oil Company and the American life-insurance companies in Germany, when these interests were attacked by German rivals during this year, yet they were very important matters and required very delicate handling by Mr. Phelps, who came forward to the protection of American interests with his usual energy and influence. It was claimed that the Standard Oil Company was trying to establish a monopoly in Germany. Mr. Phelps laid the case of the great American company before the German Department of Commerce, and smoothed out the difficulty which threatened the company. As to the insurance companies, the law required them to invest the premiums received in Germany in $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. Prussian consols. Some of the companies received nearly 5,000,000,000 marks yearly in

German premiums, and this money they were investing at five per cent., which brought down the Finance Ministry upon them. Mr. Phelps successfully interceded with Herr Miguel, the Imperial Finance Minister, and secured a reduction of the Government's demands with a prospect of the repeal of the law. Mr. Phelps called the attention of the Minister to the fact that German fire-insurance companies which operated largely in the United States were permitted to do business on depositing guarantee sums. The American life-insurance companies doing business in Germany were willing to accept a similar arrangement.

Owing to the influences already mentioned, the American colony in Berlin had grown so numerous that it was impossible to have the Thanksgiving dinner of 1891 in one place, as there was no one hall large enough to contain them. The celebration was therefore divided into three sections, one comprising the government representatives, another under the auspices of the Association of American Physicians, and the third under those of the King's Daughters of the American Church. Mr. Phelps appeared at all of the three places. Mark Twain, who made a protracted stay in Berlin during Mr. Phelps's term there, was a prominent figure at the celebration this year, and made a characteristic address.

In December Mr. Phelps quitted Berlin on a leave of absence and took a two months' trip through Egypt in order to recuperate from the effects of the exhaustive work of the year. At Alexandria he was the guest of Judge Barringer, of the International Appellate Court, and was entertained by Sir William Butler, the English Admiral, and others. At Cairo Judge Kelly gave a dinner in his honor at which Tigrane Pasha and the leading American visitors in Cairo were present. He remained in Cairo until February, and then took a trip up the Nile. At Luxor he was entertained by the American consul, a rich old Arab who had been there twenty-two years and

who had given a similar reception to General Grant when he was on his tour up the Nile. On his return he visited the Abdin Palace at Cairo, where a reception was tendered to him by the new Khedive. Mr. Phelps had known the Khedive's father, Tewfik Pasha, and personal reminiscences made the reception a very pleasant one. The Minister returned to Berlin in March, 1892, completely recovered from the poor health into which he had fallen.

In April a newspaper "canard" was started to the effect that the United States were about to annex San Domingo. Some German correspondent then started a story about an alleged misunderstanding between Minister Phelps and the German Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Baron Marschall von Bieberstein. It was said that Germany, after long-continued efforts had succeeded in the attempt to coerce the government of San Domingo into granting to her the same commercial privileges as those enjoyed by the United States; that Mr. Phelps had called upon Baron Marschall von Bieberstein in regard to this matter, and that the German Secretary had curtly refused to discuss the subject. This story caused much comment and produced a great deal of adverse criticism from the German press. A number of American papers also treated it in a sensational manner, and it assumed all the proportions of a diplomatic "incident" until it was exploded as a hoax, and the excitement subsided as quickly as it had started. It was originated by Dr. Hugo Jacobi, editor of the Munich *Allgemeine Zeitung*, who was a notorious hater of everything American, and was based on a passing remark made by Mr. Phelps. The latter had gone to the Secretary of State's office on business relating to the new extradition treaty which was being concluded between Germany and the United States and during the conversation about that treaty, Mr. Phelps jokingly referred to San Domingo, stating that the United States had made considerable concession to that republic. Baron Marschall von Bieberstein likewise jokingly replied: "I did

not know that America is exercising a protectorate over San Domingo, but nevertheless Germany could not act differently toward San Domingo." It is needless to add that the relations between Minister Phelps and the German Cabinet were pleasant, and so remained.

Disregarding the best interests of Mr. Blaine, some of his ardent but indiscreet admirers brought him forward as a candidate for the Republican presidential nomination of 1892. This was a movement in opposition to President Harrison, whose re-nomination, it was contended by many who stood high in Republican councils, would mean unavoidable defeat for the party. Mr. Blaine felt that this action of his friends would naturally cause the relations between himself and the President to be somewhat strained, and shortly before the meeting of the National Convention, the Secretary of State tendered his resignation, which was accepted. Straightway Mr. Phelps came under discussion as Mr. Blaine's successor in the Cabinet, and prominent party leaders, who had the confidence of the President, opened communication with the Minister at Berlin on the matter. But Mr. Phelps was so adverse to having it thought for a moment that he would willingly succeed his old friend in office that the further mention of his name for the position was discontinued.

While strictly loyal in his friendship for Mr. Blaine, Mr. Phelps, as was customary and proper, sent a letter of congratulation to the President upon his renomination, to which he received the following pleasant response:

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON,
June 24th, 1892.

HON. WILLIAM WALTER PHELPS,
Legation of the United States, Berlin.

MY DEAR MR. PHELPS:

I have your letter of June 11th and thank you very sincerely for your congratulations which were promptly conveyed by cable and are now renewed in your letter. I have always known

—before your appointment and since—of your close personal relations with Mr. Blaine. I have never been one who sought to rob another of his friends, or to make friendship for another the basis of suspicion on my part. I have always regarded Convention preferences as free, and have more than once said to those who expressed their desire to serve me that I thought their service was due to another by reason of their closer relations.

With very kind regards to your family,

Sincerely yours,

BENJ. HARRISON.

While all the other American ministers in Europe returned home in the summer of 1893 to look after their political interests and to take an active part in the campaign of the following autumn, Mr. Phelps remained at his post and gave the closest attention to the duties of his office. These were mostly of a routine character and received little attention from the newspapers of the day, and it was not until the Thanksgiving dinner of that year that another splutter was made in the newspapers over another fake which had even less foundation than that of the San Domingo "incident." Minister Phelps gave a great reception at his house on Thanksgiving Day, and at the dinner he toasted both the incoming and the outgoing parties, the Democrats having defeated Mr. Harrison for re-election. He said:

President Harrison has given the cleanest and most successful administration in American annals. When history makes up its record, on every page will be written the name of Benjamin Harrison. America is the only land on which God has poured forth such a river of good things that it takes a Thanksgiving Day to dispose of them. America is the only nation that could have a national Thanksgiving. Other nations try it, and the day instead of becoming a day of thanks becomes a day of prayer. When other nations pray, they pray for just what the United States has got. The Jew and the Gentile are

the same in America. A man's faith or his lack of faith does not hurt him there.

Imagine the surprise of Mr. Phelps and his friends when, a few days later, there appeared in the American newspapers a report that he had gone out of his way to give the German Government a slap in the face and to praise Bismarck to the disparagement of the Government. Before it could be contradicted, the story had been widely circulated in America, but as soon as the truth was known, the American newspapers with rare exceptions recalled whatever adverse criticisms had been made upon the fabricated report. The German press had from the beginning refused to take notice of the "canard," while the members of the German Government took special pains to show by numerous courtesies that they were aware of Mr. Phelps's correct utterances and that, far from offending, his speech had, if possible, increased the regard in which he was held at the German Court.

Indeed, Mr. Phelps was receiving every day expressions of the most sincere regret from German officials in all the Government's departments on the prospect of his leaving Berlin as a result of the defeat of the Republican party in America. Now that they were about to lose the popular and hospitable American Minister, the Germans frankly showed the esteem in which they held him, and although they all felt glad of the success of the anti-protection party in the United States, yet they were sorry to lose such a cultivated and tactful diplomat as Mr. Phelps. It was about this time that Charles Lowe, writing in the Cincinnati *Tribune* of the Ministers who had represented America at the German capital, said of Mr. Phelps:

> It may be doubted whether any American Minister in Berlin ever enjoyed more of the confidence and intimacy of the official world there than Mr. Phelps, whose mansion, however, is none the less a meeting ground for the social and intellectual ele-

ments of distinction which used to form almost the exclusive objects of his predecessor's hospitality—a meeting ground where the honors are so warmly and gracefully done by Mr. Phelps and his cultivated daughter. With his spare and slender frame, dark, sparkling eyes, and olive hue, Mr. Phelps has more the air of a Romanic than of an Anglo-Saxon race. But if his appearance is southern, his mental fibre is of the north in its sunniest and most inviting aspect, while his subtlety is such as could not be surpassed in Spain.

In January, 1893, Minister Phelps's health being somewhat affected by the trying climate of Northern Germany, he went south on leave of absence. He travelled through Spain, Morocco, Algiers, Tunis, and Italy. While he was away on this vacation, Governor Werts of New Jersey appointed him Judge of the Court of Errors and Appeals of that State, and when he returned to his post in Berlin he closed up all the business of the Legation on hand and turned over the Legation to General Runyon, his successor, upon the latter's arrival in Berlin. In his last report to the Secretary of State at Washington, Mr. Phelps wrote:

And as I now relinquish the charge of it, I want to call the attention of the Secretary further to the fact that the business of the Legation up to date is completed, every paper on file and every record made, so that the secretaries, the clerks, and the messengers stand ready to give their undivided attention to any new business which may be submitted by their new chief. I make this statement with the less reserve, because it suggests the propriety of my saying a word about the staff of the Legation to whose credit this condition of affairs is almost entirely due. All connected with the Legation have had long experience, and used the fruits of it with zeal and fidelity for the public service.

Thus Mr. Phelps left Germany, where he had spent four of the most fruitful and happy years of his busy life in

the service of his country. His achievements in those years had attracted the attention of the world and had brought distinction to himself and credit and advantage to his country. He was happy in the satisfaction that attended his labors, and happy in the warm and lasting friendships he had made with many of the greatest men of his day. He was almost as popular in Germany as in America. His high purpose and his sterling integrity inspired the highest esteem and secured the confidence and affection of the Germans, who could fully appreciate those qualities of heart and mind, while his intellectual accomplishments and his ability as a man of affairs won their admiration.

When Mr. Phelps returned from Germany, he sought his own estate and again became a real Jerseyman. He was welcomed home by his political friends, among whom were most of the eminent party leaders of the State. They had a hope and expectation that he would again actively enter into political movements and become a candidate for United States Senator; but he no longer had the ambition that had formerly inspired him and he would not seek a seat in the Upper House of Congress.

When he arrived, he expressed the greatest delight to get back to his New Jersey home, and he was pleased with the words of praise with which nearly every newspaper in the country greeted him. Plans were formed for bringing him to the front for further political honors, but his health and his inclinations prompted him to retire from an honored public life and enjoy quietly a position on the bench of the highest court in the State, to which he had been appointed by the Democratic Governor, Mr. Werts.

CHAPTER XXVI

Reasons for His Appointment to the Bench—His Commission—Return to New Jersey—Tells of His Parting Interview with the German Emperor—Sworn in as Judge of the New Jersey Court of Errors and Appeals—An Impressive Ceremony

THE appointment of Mr. Phelps to the bench and his acceptance amazed the politicians of all parties, puzzled the newspapers, and surprised the general public. The reasons given at the time for the choice made by the Governor differed very widely, and were largely without substantial foundation. The political discreditors of Mr. Phelps originated the absurd report that the appointment was the forerunner and an inducement for a change of political faith on the part of the recipient of that honor, but, although this rumor received wide circulation, it soon perished for lack of substance.

The facts, however, were that a previous Democratic governor of New Jersey had made it a rule to appoint no Republicans to judgeships of any kind, with the result that the bench of the State became filled with Democrats, who were in many instances most intense partisans. This practice was vigorously denounced by the Republicans and began to meet the disapproval of fair-minded Democrats. Governor Werts, himself a lawyer of high standing, was desirous of raising the tone of the court of last resort and of preventing politics influencing its decisions. A vacancy having occurred in the Court of Errors and Appeals, he determined to signalize a departure from the policy of his immediate

predecessors by the appointment to the vacant seat of some Republican lawyer of unmistakable talent, whose whole qualification for the position would be beyond any cavil. He respected and admired Mr. Phelps, with whom he had a personal acquaintance, and knowing that the popular diplomat was soon to return to his home, the Governor tendered him the office.

This offer came to Mr. Phelps when he had had his fill of partisan strife and its rewards. He felt no craving for further political honors. During all his diverse and successful career he ever had a longing to get back into the realm of the law, which, in his early manhood, circumstances compelled him to leave. The law and its study, with its problems, axioms, intricacies, certainties and uncertainties, its application and decisions, all had for him a constant and enduring attraction. The offer of the judgeship reached Minister Phelps at Berlin at a timely moment and a reply of acceptance immediately followed, for his ambitions were always pure and such as led to valuable service to his countrymen.

There were rabid Democratic politicians in the State who, favoring the old strictly partisan methods, predicted that the Senate, in which there was a large Democratic majority, would not confirm the appointment, but when the matter came before that body in February, confirmation ensued without the slightest opposition. The Secretary of State then forwarded to Mr. Phelps the following notification:

TRENTON, N. J., March 4, 1893.

MY DEAR JUDGE:

It gives me great pleasure to hand you herewith your commission as a Judge of the Court of Errors and Appeals of this State; and permit me at the same time to congratulate you, as the State also is to be congratulated, upon your appointment. Of course I very well know that it is a little premature to address you by your forthcoming title, although the records of this Department are complete on that point, except as to

the matter of your official oath. I trust and believe you may find the position a most congenial and agreeable one. Your term of office begins on the 18th instant.

Sincerely yours,

HENRY C. KELSEY.

TO HON. WILLIAM WALTER PHELPS,
Berlin.

The commission which was enclosed read:

THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY

To WILLIAM WALTER PHELPS, Esquire, *Greeting:*

Reposing special trust and confidence in your integrity, prudence and ability, I have, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, appointed you, the said William Walter Phelps, to be a judge of the Court of Errors and Appeals in and for the State of New Jersey. You, the said William Walter Phelps, are therefore by these presents, commissioned to be Judge of the Court of Errors and Appeals in and for the said State of New Jersey. To have and to hold and enjoy said office with all the powers, privileges, fees, perquisites, rights and advantages to the same belonging or appertaining for and during the legal time.

In testimony whereof, the Great Seal of the State is hereunto affixed.

Witness, GEORGE T. WERTS, *Governor of the State of New Jersey*, at Trenton, this eighteenth day of March, in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-three, and of the Independence of the United States the one hundred and seventeenth.

GEORGE T. WERTS.

By the Governor.
HENRY C. KELSEY,
Secretary of State.

Mr. Phelps reached New York in the middle of June. The inevitable newspaper reporter was on hand to meet him, and this is a portion of the interview that followed:

"I am just delighted to get home," said Mr. Phelps. "To be sure, my experience in Berlin has been extremely agreeable. But now I can eschew politics, fortunately. You know, there is none, or rather, ought to be none on the bench; so when, next Tuesday, I am sworn in as Judge of the Court of Errors and Appeals, an office which came to me very unexpectedly from the Democratic Governor of New Jersey, I shall retire from politics, at least for the term as Judge. No; all my political ambition has been gratified, and there is no office —not even a United States Senatorship, as I feel now—that I would willingly accept."

"German newspapers have said you will soon return to Berlin and make it your future home."

"There is no foundation for such a story."

"What of your farewell reception by the Emperor?"

"The Emperor paid the United States a great compliment. The Sunday before my departure the Emperor drove in from Potsdam, fifteen miles, for the special purpose of receiving General Runyon, my successor, and bidding me good-by. In parting with me the Emperor, taking me by the hand, said: 'Come, now, Mr. Phelps, you will agree with me that my subjects who have emigrated to the United States have proved themselves the best citizens there?' I replied that I thought the native-born Americans made pretty good citizens. I assured him, however, that the Germans in America were very highly appreciated, and were among our best citizens. Then the Emperor told me how pleased he was that his sailor boys had acquitted themselves so well during the naval review. He appeared to be particularly delighted with the reports that the peculiar marching of his soldiers had evoked even more applause than did the fine appearance of the Russians and the French. He is very proud of the navy as well as of the army. He was deeply grateful for the courtesies extended his naval representatives here, and desired me to express his gratitude to President Cleveland. The Emperor jokingly referred to the fact that one of his subjects had succeeded in capturing my daughter. He seemed to enjoy my loss far more than I did."

A regular term of the Court of Errors and Appeals met

on June 20, 1893. The swearing in of Mr. Phelps as a Judge of the court, was expected at that time, and it was looked for as an interesting event because so much significance had been attached to the appointment. Consequently the courtroom was crowded with lawyers, judges, ex-judges, and men prominent in politics and public life from all over the State. When the newly appointed Judge arrived at the Capitol he was warmly greeted by several of the heads of the State Departments, who wished to show him around the recently enlarged and improved building, which he had not seen since its reconstruction. At the hour for opening the court, members of the bar in attendance appointed a committee to seek Mr. Phelps and escort him to the courtroom. In making his way to the bench, he had to stop every few steps to shake hands with some of the lawyers and officials in the crowded room who were old acquaintances. He was approached and welcomed by the Chancellor and Chief Justice, who introduced him to the other members of the court. When the court was called to order, it was announced that the first business would be the administration of the oath of office to William Walter Phelps as an Associate Judge. The bench and bar then arose while Mr. Phelps solemnly swore to administer justice without fear or favor, and to uphold the Constitution of the United States and the State of New Jersey. After signing the oath, Judge Phelps took his seat upon the judicial bench in New Jersey, almost thirty years after he had declined a judgeship offered to him by a governor of New York. What an eventful life had been his in the meantime!

CHAPTER XXVII

Mr. Phelps's Interest in Englewood—Some of the Things He Did for the Township — Honored by His Neighbors — A Warm "Welcome Home" from Them on His Return from Germany

AMONG the many events of Mr. Phelps's life, the tributes of respect and affection which he received from his friends and neighbors at Englewood were perhaps to him the most pleasurable. From the first settlement at Teaneck he considered Englewood his home town and never failed to manifest his loyalty to and interest in it. It was friends here who assisted him, by offering their acres for sale, in acquiring the great estate, the improvement of which contributed so largely to surrounding land values. This he referred to happily in a speech at a local reception: "Englewood gave me more land than I wanted. Indeed, it was rather forced upon me. It happened in this wise: My sanguine friends who forced it upon me could n't keep it and I could n't get rid of it."

In those early days when the town had scarcely graduated from village life and was innocent of even dreams of the growth that was about to set in and develop a beautiful and properous city, public improvement was very slow; even that private enterprise which is displayed in a regard for appearances in home surroundings was awaiting the influence of example and incentive. Although an entire stranger in the community, except in the few acquaintances of business channels, Mr. Phelps promptly entered into the active life of the community, evincing a keen interest in all its affairs. This sentiment broadened as asso-

ciation with the people developed personal characteristics. He rapidly acquired an intimacy with public and private needs, and was constant in devising methods to meet them individually or offering incentives to others to join in acts for the common good. Conspicuous in this respect was his extensive road-making, referred to elsewhere.

In 1891 Mr. Phelps made six different propositions to the citizens, to bear a large share of the expense of certain improvements. These included a soldiers' monument, a new railroad station, a public park, enlargement of the National Guard armory, and additional road work. There were impediments to carrying out all these purposes, but this did not check the public spirit or generosity of Mr. Phelps. He gave a valuable strip of land to the Englewood Field Club, in addition to a liberal cash contribution to the new club-house fund, an incentive which assured stability for that semi-public enterprise. This stimulus was felt in so many channels for the betterment of Englewood and its people that few movements of any moment were undertaken or carried through without his interest being voluntarily manifested. He was especially gratified with the work of the Englewood Improvement Association, which carried out many ideas for promoting the good of the place. After receiving the report of the Association for the year 1891, at Berlin, Mr. Phelps sent to its president a note of congratulation and a check. His note was in the cordial, informal manner that marked so much of his correspondence:

> I have just finished reading your report. You said it so nicely, and what you said was so nice, that I want to celebrate last year's success of the Association by sending it a thousand dollars. Please put the money where it will do most to benefit the Englewood we both like so much.

This money was used to place a clock in the tower of the Lyceum, which marks the passing hours and recalls

to old and new generations him who was so soon to enter upon the eternal day that is limitless and uninfluenced by Time.

The failure of the soldiers' monument project was one of the few causes of regret to Mr. Phelps. The citizens of Englewood rarely evinced a lack of patriotism or regard for the memory of the heroic dead; but in this instance they failed in appreciation of a proposition that few communities would have permitted to pass unfulfilled.

When a noted burglar was caught in the act of robbing the Teaneck schoolhouse, and in the desperate encounter that ensued nearly killed a young man of the community, Mr. Phelps, telegraphing from Washington, promptly added one thousand dollars to the reward for the capture of the desperado. The burglar, who was severely punished in the fight with the young man, was apprehended and sent to State prison for a long term.

An important work, which has resulted in great benefit to Englewood, was the Overpeck Canal. A ditch ran through a long stretch of land purchased by Mr. Phelps. He conceived that a canal could be built here that would be a practical utility to the town for commercial purposes, especially in the transportation of coal, lumber, and heavy freight, by way of the Hackensack River and Overpeck Creek. There was somewhat of an engineering problem involved, which failed to solve the difficulty, as a sufficient depth of water could not be obtained except at an outlay far beyond any possible compensating result. So far as the work was carried out, however, the canal became of great value to Englewood by forming an outlet for a system of surface drainage. In this canal improvement, Mr. Phelps was unavoidably involved in a prolonged litigation over a mill-right of unknown value until his enterprise entered upon the premises. Many hundreds of acres of land were reclaimed through the drainage afforded by the canal.

Mr. Phelps was one of the first to see the importance

of protecting and improving the Palisades, and through his efforts much was accomplished in this respect by individual owners of tracts of land before the public movement was inaugurated. The future of this wild and rugged section, then in the first stages of development into summer homes and country seats, was clear to his vision, and his love of nature prompted him to urge upon all the wisdom of preserving it from the despoilers who more recently had to be dislodged at great expense.

Of the gentlemen most prominent in and near Englewood at the period of Mr. Phelps's settlement at Teaneck, many have passed to their reward; but a few remain, still conspicuous in the successful direction of private and public enterprises, and laboring for the further advancement of everything tending to maintain the (now) city in its position as an example to all neighbors in whatever makes for charity, public spirit, patriotism, and progress. In this respect, the city recently received the gift of a home for the public library, and through several private benefactions and annual public appropriations, a thoroughly equipped free hospital is maintained. When stricken with his final illness, Mr. Phelps expressed to his family physician a determination to make a special provision for this new institution, but the progress of his disease, more rapid than was anticipated, prevented the consummation of such a purpose.

The leading men of affairs in and about Englewood with whom Mr. Phelps held more or less intimate business and social relations during the earlier days included J. Wyman Jones, credited with being the "father of Englewood"; Daniel Drake Smith, Lebbeus Chapman, Livingston K. Miller, David Hoadley, Washington R. Vermilye, Frank B. Nichols, General T. B. Van Buren, Sheppard Homans, I. Smith Homans, Colonel H. W. Banks, Jeffrey A. Humphrey, William A. Booth, James Otis Morse, Wm. H. De Ronde, Wm. P. Coe, Colonel William M. Grosvenor, General Samuel A. Duncan, and Donald

Mackay. These and others, regardless of political affiliations, were always ready to manifest their appreciation of the neighbor who had won such distinctive honors at home and abroad.

In October, 1890, Mr. Phelps and his family were tendered a reception at the Englewood Club. As ladies and gentlemen were included in the membership, it was a large family organization, embracing the leading citizens, and the reception assumed the proportions of a neighborhood demonstration of appreciation. The sincerity, unanimity, and spontaneity that were the actuating influences prompting this gathering, received frank expression by the president of the club, Mr. Sheppard Homans, in brief words of welcome:

Ladies and gentlemen:

We are met this evening to welcome our distinguished fellow-citizen, the Hon. William Walter Phelps, American Minister to Germany, who is spending a brief vacation among us. We meet to do honor, not to the statesman and diplomatist, but to our friend and neighbor, in whose growing reputation we take a just pride and pleasure. We know that amidst the splendors of the German court, amidst the momentous issues in which he is taking such a conspicuous part, there is a warm corner in his heart for those amongst whom he dwelt for so many years, and we know that our welcome is grateful to him.

Mr. Phelps, allow me, in the name of the members of the Englewood Club, to extend to you our hearty greetings, and to wish that you and yours may enjoy many years of health and happiness.

The reply of Mr. Phelps, following an enthusiastic demonstration by the company, was as follows:

I thank you, Mr. Homans, for your kind welcome. You are right; I did not forget my friends and never shall. This was, and is, and ever will be, my home. I should love to

speak of its past, its present, and its future, but I am aware that any speech making on this social occasion would be out of place, and I shall say but a word. I want especially to make it plain by my own declaration that I highly appreciate the honor the Englewood Club has done me, and in my name and Mrs. Phelps's to thank you all, ladies and gentlemen, for the pleasure you are giving us.

I knew before this that the occasion was without political coloring, and I recognized with greatest satisfaction that on the committee of arrangements were the names of two distinguished leaders of the political party I have so long and vigorously fought. However bad I may be as a politician, they welcome me as a neighbor and a friend. It is an especial compliment. If this and other flattering circumstances of this evening are calculated to foster an excessive pride in me, I shall be saved by this consideration: for twenty-four years, first with the ardor of youth, afterwards with the strength of manhood, I struggled to make Englewood grow. I was called away, and now I return to find that Englewood has grown more in all directions during my one year of absence than in my ten years of presence. May this growth continue, whoever comes or goes, and may Englewood give to new thousands the peaceful, happy lives that it has given to us and to our children.

It was three years later, when Mr. Phelps had finally returned from his mission abroad, that his friends and neighbors of Englewood, ignoring party lines, resolved to give him such a "Welcome Home" as would make the occasion memorable. The returned diplomat, since arrival, had declined many invitations from business, political, and social bodies desirous of displaying appreciation of his distinguished public services at home and abroad and their respect for his personal worth; but he said that this was an invitation which no Englewood man could decline. His only hope was "that this occasion may be kept strictly as a neighborhood gathering, and that I may not be considered as thinking that I have any

claim to the honor you now do me, except that I have been away from home a long time and am eager to meet again my friends and neighbors."

The committee complied with the guest's wish and still had a company of more than five-score gentlemen, including many names notable in business, religion, literature, and art. In an assemblage of such diversified talents there were naturally speakers who contributed the varied elements of instruction and entertainment, and they made the "welcome" remarkable in local annals. Mr. Phelps was himself in one of his most felicitous moods, largely reminiscent, as the occasion suggested. In his catalogue of credits due to Englewood for what it had given to him, including a home, health, and public spirit, Mr. Phelps caused much amusement by recalling the early means of railroad transportation to and from the city, which he did in this manner:

It gave me friends. There is no time for such things in town. And friendships that last long take time to grow. Here we pioneers found abundant time and opportunity. Modern Englewood life still gives great opportunities; but nothing like the one train which took us all to town in the morning and brought us back at night; the morning exchange which met twice daily and "cleared" the business of the town. No one will forget its start, which never occurred until 'Squire Miller at the corner had waved and smiled his good-bye; nor its return, which never occurred until the conductor was assured that all his passengers had found it, so haphazard was its position outside the Jersey City station, and always shifting between freight cars and coal cars.

Mr. Phelps paid tribute to the fealty of Englewood politically, a town with natural Democratic leanings that generally followed its leanings at the polls:

And yet, if the clouds were gathering thick against their young townsman, in some way or another the weary wire on

election nights would announce such a majority in favor of one Republican candidate as to make my election sure.

The debit side of his relationship to Englewood was touched upon with equal happiness in his reference to the acquirement of land, and in this way:

Sometimes I meet a man who asks me for the loose stones on a Palisade lot; I yield, and soon afterwards I learn that he has started a quarry. Again, I tell some poor man he can have the dead wood on some wood lot; the next time I drive that way, I discover that he has cleared the field and is ploughing.

Englewood was especially generous in its support of athletics, and the rivalry between its Field Club base-ball players and those of the Oritani Field Club at Hackensack was thus introduced by Mr. Phelps, a trivial incident, but of so popular a nature that it was received with the enthusiastic demonstration always accorded the victors in manly sports:

I grumble some against Englewood, and worst about my Teaneck roads. I take great pride in keeping them smooth for my pleasure in driving and that of my friends. To do that I have to strenuously ward off all loaded teams. The temptation naturally is for all such to make short cuts, at times when they think they won't be caught. And when I do catch them the interview is never a pleasant one. Then I make the heaviest charge against Englewood for wear of temper. Why, only last Tuesday, the Fourth of July, as all Englewood was in Hackensack, I thought I could have a quiet drive as an old man, with an old horse, on his old farm would like to have. Lost in pleasant contemplation, I turned a bosky thicket to discover in *flagrante delicto*, the heaviest of express wagons laden with a score of heaviest fellows. Could there have been a more troubled moment? I saw at a glance the situation. It was our victorious ball club, flushed with victory and thinking at the moment that the world belonged to them. Should

I check their hilarity? If I did not, where were discipline and order and the doctrine of trespass, which both as a land-owner and Judge I was to enforce? The moment of decision was painful to both parties, as we viewed each other, and while hesitating I was lost.

Your captain was master of the situation. In a second he was on the driver's seat, his men were on their feet, and he waved his flag in wild enthusiasm as he ordered, "Three cheers for William Walter Phelps." It was a knock-down for me. The loaded team rattled off to Englewood, rutting a score of pretty road-beds, and I dropped into one of my densest groves and drove slowly home, as Napoleon drove from the field of Waterloo.

And that was n't very bad, for it was the Fourth of July, and it was to celebrate an Englewood victory. And so are all the grudges I have against Englewood; each so small, so insignificant, that, like Rip's drink, it does n't count.

Departing from local topics for a few moments, the guest of the evening said:

Perhaps I can divert the stream of reporters from Teaneck, who come like flies, notebook in hand, to know what this going out of politics means, if I tell you, who did so much toward keeping me in, that it means that after thirty years of active practical political life, and that includes attending caucuses, suggesting some candidates, suppressing others, attending primaries, stumping all October, attending conventions, local, State, and national, I think I have done my duty and am entitled to a rest. And were I not thus discharged by completion of a pretty good round term of political service, I should feel that I was debarred from partisanship, offensive or otherwise, when I became a judge.

I entertain an old-fashioned idea on the subject of the judiciary, and think that a judge ought to so conduct himself as to inspire his fellow citizens with such an idea of impartiality that Republican or Democratic suitor would have no fear of bias against himself in any political question that might be brought before this court.

Somewhat similar was the feeling I had, that, when I was a foreign Minister and representing the American people as a whole, I ought not to give my time and my efforts to advancing the interests of a part of them, however much my political sympathies were with that party. It was different when I was a representative in Congress; I was sent there to advocate a certain class of political opinions.

The voters in the district at the polls decided that these were the opinions they wanted, and unless the man who was elected by them represented these opinions there could be no government by a majority and consequently no government by the people.

Happy speeches followed by the leading guests, and Mr. Herbert Turner, one of the speakers, commended the career of Mr. Phelps to the attention of young men as an example of the gentleman and scholar in politics. He said that the young men of the country would find in the illustrious career of our former Minister to Germany an example well worthy of imitation.

One of the incidents of the evening that was very pleasing to Mr. Phelps was the delivery to him during the festivities of a telegram of congratulations from his daughter in Berlin, Marian von Rottenburg-Phelps.

CHAPTER XXVIII

Yale Makes Him a Doctor of Laws—His Continuous and Important Work for that University—His Many other Benefactions to His Alma Mater—Leader of the "Young Yale" Movement—The Charter Amended—He is Elected a Fellow and Serves on the Board for Twenty Years

ON going through his mail one morning, at the legation in Berlin, Minister Phelps opened a modest little envelope, which promised nothing unusual, but, as he read the letter, the diplomat leaned back in his chair and a flush mantled his cheek. The remainder of the morning's mail was forgotten and, for the moment, all else passed from his mind, as he absently fingered the little missive, while his memory was busy with the scenes of his youth at old Yale. Thirty years had intervened, years of absorbing struggle and manifold success in the law, in finance, in statecraft, and in diplomacy, the fruit-bearing years of a man's life devoted to duty and his country, but these scenes of brilliant achievement in the arena of the world's work did not obscure the memory of those earlier days spent at his loved Alma Mater.

There he again saw himself a happy and care-free youth, resting under the shade of the Elms, with his companions; in the recitation room, easily sustaining his own part and secretly causing harmless mirth at the eccentricities of the professors or his classmates; in the debating club, and through all the varied life at a great college, dreaming of the future, with high aspiration and half-conceived purposes, all the time forming friendships

which endured through life, and imbibing a love for the old place second only to family ties.

These were the scenes recalled by the letter in his hand, which informed him that Yale had crowned him with one of her most coveted laurels and that he was now a Doctor of Laws—a reward for his brilliant achievements and his successful services to his country. It read:

YALE UNIVERSITY,
NEW HAVEN, CONN., July 3, 1890.

MY DEAR MR. PHELPS:

It is my duty to send you a formal notice of the action taken by the President and Fellows, at the recent public commencement, in conferring upon you the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws.

The corporation were glad to avail themselves of such an opportunity to testify their appreciation, not merely of your general public life and influence; but specially of those recent diplomatic services, which have deserved and received the distinguished approval of the whole nation.

The diploma certifying to this act I have ventured to retain, as the President's signature is wanting, and perhaps it will be safer to postpone its delivery until your return.

Very faithfully yours,
FRANKLIN B. DEXTER,
Secretary.

HON. WM. WALTER PHELPS, LL.D.

This recognition was very gratifying to Mr. Phelps, though not merely as a reward for his public services. To him it was the complete and final indorsement by his Alma Mater of his labors on her behalf—labors that were not at all times accepted in the spirit in which they were offered.

Yet, though his judgment was sometimes questioned, the motive that prompted him could never be doubted. To the natural pride every man has in his own college, his interest in Yale became increased by the trust reposed in him by his father on behalf of the institution and by

his marriage with the daughter of one of its great benefactors. Needless, then, to say that at all times and in all places, Yale held a warm place in his heart.

While he was at the German Court, Mr. Armstrong, a brother of General Armstrong of Hampton, Va., fame, came there clothed with considerable dignity as an ambassador from the then Hawaiian Court on some official business. At a fixed time, with much ceremony and the usual diplomatic etiquette, he was introduced to the resident foreign plenipotentiaries. Watching his opportunity, the American Minister drew Mr. Armstrong aside into an adjoining room, saying:

"We 've had enough of this conventionalism and nonsense. Let 's talk about good old days at Yale."

They had been students at Yale at the same time.

Just one other incident of a different kind may be cited here to illustrate his active interest in the old college and to show that his exertions could always be depended upon when Yale was in need of money. It also shows how powerful his influence was when he chose to put it forth. The story is obtained from a classmate who now occupies a distinguished position:

It was in the sixties. I was calling upon him at his office in Exchange Place. He said to me:

"I wish you had come in earlier. Professor Thacher has just been here—came with his bag, evidently expecting to stay two or three days in New York, trying to raise some money—wants $10,000 to meet some emergencies. I told him that I would attend to it, and that he might go back to New Haven this afternoon, confident of having it. As soon as he left the office I went to Dodge, to Chittenden and two or three others. We made up the money and then I stopped on my way back at the office of the *Evening Post*, and gave them the item: 'Professor Thacher came to New York this morning to raise a considerable sum for Yale, expecting to spend several days in doing it, but the amount required was raised so quickly that the Professor returned to New Haven this afternoon.'"

Mr. Phelps, in further conversation with me, while his eyes showed their wonted sparkle, remarked:

"Won't Thacher be surprised to see that item when he takes up his *Post* to read in the cars on his way home! He will wonder how the *Post* ever got track of his movements."

In many ways, all of which have not been made public, Yale was financially benefited by the generosity or friendly interest and exertions of Mr. Phelps. In 1880, he donated to the college 212 volumes (of which 69 were folios) relating chiefly to the history of Great Britain. The majority of these works or the editions were new to the Yale library, and were consequently the more valuable.

In 1889, he gave to the Yale gymnasium fund $1000.

At the commencement, in 1892, contributions were announced from Mr. Phelps, as follows: $5000 for the new scientific school building, $3000 to the university library, and $1000 to the medical school fund.

In the fall of the same year, he bore the expense of uniforming the Yale Republicans. Before he knew anything of this movement, the young Republicans at Yale had organized eight hundred strong and adopted the name of the "Phelps Battalion." Mr. Phelps was in Berlin at the time, but when he was notified of the action of the Yale men, he instantly cabled:

BERLIN, Oct. 8, 1892.

JAMES F. BURKE, New York City.

I claim the honor of uniforming Yale Republicans. Have sent check for entire amount necessary.

WM. WALTER PHELPS.

Twelve hundred students turned out in the Phelps Battalion that year, and it was said at the time that never before had there been such political enthusiasm among Yale men as was displayed on the night when Chauncey M. Depew addressed them after being escorted through the streets by the Phelps Battalion.

For about twenty-five years Mr. Phelps paid to the college, usually to the library fund, a yearly sum amounting to about $3000. This was the income of a trust fund of $50,000 bequeathed by the will of John Jay Phelps to his son, in trust, to use the annual income of the same for the interest and advantage of Yale College in such a manner as the son should deem best, during his natural life; and upon the son's death, the $50,000 should be paid to the college for what use or purpose the son should direct.

When Judge Phelps died he added in his will, to the bequest of his father, an additional $50,000, directing that the sum of these gifts should be devoted to building a memorial gateway and building at Yale. This direction was executed as speedily as possible. The executors of the will and the corporation of the university readily came to an understanding and it was decided to erect a Memorial Gateway and Recitation Hall on College Street, as recitation and lecture rooms were at that time one of the greatest needs of the institution. The executors designated Mr. C. C. Haight as the architect, he having designed the Vanderbilt hall. Mr. Haight produced a plan of an imposing structure and, although its cost was estimated at over $100,000, it was adopted, the Phelps family making up the extra amount.

The Phelps Memorial forms the main entrance to the campus and completes the quadrangle which Yale men had long desired. It stands between Lawrence and Welch halls. It is in the collegiate gothic style and in design is a tower flanked by four octagonal turrets, with an elevation from the ground level to the top of the parapet of about one hundred feet. In the centre there is a lofty arch sixteen feet wide leading from College Street, making the principal entrance to the campus. The monotony of the line of buildings on that side of the quadrangle is relieved by the Phelps building, which projects fourteen feet east and west beyond the walls of the

former, while the massive tower rising above the roofs of the Welch and Lawrence, and projecting boldly in advance of them, serves admirably to unite their somewhat different styles of architecture. It is built of brownstone, and its interior is very substantial—the walls of masonry, the floors of iron and cement, the staircases of cast and wrought iron, with marble treads. Above the archway, which is 20 feet high, are four floors containing fourteen classrooms and also rooms for the Classical Club of Yale. It was the first building at Yale to be fitted with an elevator.

The interest of Mr. Phelps in the welfare of Yale was too deep and abiding to restrict his activity to gifts. He was always on the alert to do things that would be beneficial to it and to exploit its worth and advantages. He was too clear-headed to be blinded by his enthusiasm. He saw what was being done at other colleges and desired Yale to forge ahead. His pride in his Alma Mater caused him to yearn for her pre-eminence as an institution of learning. He found others, as loyal as he, who agreed with him, and there grew up among the younger Yale alumni a strong sentiment for a change in the government of the college. As it crystallized it became known as the "Young Yale" movement, and if Mr. Phelps was not the actual originator, he was the foremost leader of the movement. On him devolved the labor of pushing the movement, on him fell the responsibility and the criticism, and to him was due the credit of carrying the agitation to a successful consummation.

By a charter granted by the Connecticut legislature in 1745 the government of Yale College was constituted of the president and ten Congregationalist clergymen who called themselves "Fellows," and this continued until 1792, when, in consideration of certain grants from the State, the corporation voted that the governor, lieutenant-governor, and six senior assistants in Council of State should become Fellows, making a corporation of eighteen,

besides the president. They had control of all departments of the college. In 1819, on the adoption of the new constitution, the six senior senators were substituted for six senior assistants. The State senators gave but little attention to the duties of this honorary office and the whole government practically was, as before, in the hands of the ministers, who filled all vacancies at their will, electing their successors, and consequently the government was a self-perpetuating body.

For a number of years there had been a great deal of criticism of the management, especially among the younger alumni, whose interest in the college was yet fresh and active. This sentiment, however, had found no formal expression until it was voiced by Mr. Phelps, around whom had rallied all those who believed that new blood should be introduced into the management to give the college new life, a wider field of operation, and a more progressive spirit. It was at an alumni meeting at the commencement of 1870, when the Young Yale movement took the open field. The older alumni had been discussing the desirability of a change in the constitution, and they had to confess that they could not agree upon any recommendation. They unanimously approved the general policy of the college, its discipline and curriculum, and the management of its funds. Speeches were made by the president, Governor Hawley, Professors Trowbridge, Weir, and others. When they had done, there was a loud and imperative call from the younger of the alumni for William Walter Phelps of the class of 1860. Mr. Phelps responded with a speech that inaugurated the reform and caused a breeze of surprise among the staid old members of the corporation. He said:

> What I desire to say to you is the message of Young Yale to Old Yale—it is what the graduates of the last fifteen years think and say to each other, what they have not yet had opportunity and courage to say to you. Doubtful with the becoming modesty of youth, taught to believe that old men were for

counsel, we have gathered for many a year in pilgrimage to this literary Mecca, and have held our peace. Now that we gather here, full grown men, who, outside in other spheres, are doing the heavy work and shouldering the highest responsibilities, it would be a false modesty that should refuse to give utterance in public and at the college altar to what is said abroad.

The younger alumni are not satisfied with the management of the college. They do not think that in anything except scholarship it keeps progress with the age. They find no fault with the men; they find much fault with the spirit of the management. It is too conservative and narrow. Our youthful admiration and love for president and professors burn with a greater warmth now that we can recognize their superiority to ordinary men. What the fiery Spaniard said to Lincoln—"Humblest of the humble before his own soul; greatest of the great before the world,"—we claim for our president. What no pen records, except that which tells of the highest moral and intellectual gifts unselfishly devoted to the cause of education, do we claim for Porter, Hadley, Thacher, and their noble associates. What man can do, they do.

But they cannot do everything. The college wants a living connection with the world without—an infusion of some of the new blood that throbs in every vein of this mighty republic—a knowledge of what is wanted in the scenes for which Yale educates her children; this living connection with the outer world, this knowledge of the people's wants, can be acquired only from those who are in the people and of the people.

This great want can be supplied only by the alumni. Put them into your government; get them from some other State than Connecticut, from some other profession than the ministry. Call them, and they will gladly and eagerly come. Call them, and with the reform will pass away every appearance of alumni coldness and indifference. Men love that for which they scheme and toil. Selfishness—"an enlightened selfishness," like Mayor Gunther's patriotism—will make them push an institution, whose success is their own encomium. Let her thousand alumni from Maine to California be Yale College—and the bounding blood of youth will throb in every one of its

ancient members. Believe me, men—who sit on the Supreme Bench, who control the Cabinet of the Executive, who, in all moral and intellectual reforms, are the leaders of their countrymen—Yale men, who got their training here, are as able to manage its affairs as the Rev. Mr. Pickering of Squashville, who is exhausted with keeping a few sheep in the wilderness, or the Hon. Mr. Domuch of Oldport, who seeks to annul the charter of the only railway that benefits his constituents.

Young Yale asks more—that that worldliness which is not inconsistent with godliness, which is an absolute condition of earthly success; that tact, that recognition of human weakness and infirmity to which all successful men cater, and which gives one Yalensian the largest and richest church in the metropolis; which makes another the first law officer of a late administration, shall not forever, by its absence, check Yale's growth. Don't let Harvard, our great rival, alone have the benefit of it. Let Yale condescend to be worldly wise.

The son of a president is "a young gentleman about to enter college." Yale says, "It is folly to secure him." Mr. Porson thinks other young men will more quickly recognize the force of "Aga." "We will make no effort to secure him," and saintly Yale folds her arms in the dignity of saintliness, and young Vicksburg goes to Harvard. The press, in a telegram, carries the fact to hamlet and prairie, and the fame of Harvard enters a thousand households for the first time.

Again, Yale says: "Learning, not festivity, is the true object of a college. We will not cater to the weakness of alumni by offering other attractions than the philosophical orations of its graduating class." Five hundred Yalensians, needing a very little impetus to gather them under the old trees, find nothing, and stay away. Five hundred Harvard men, needing the same impulse, pack their portmanteaus and go to Cambridge, because Lord Lackland and the Hon. Mr. Blower, the distinguished Senator from Alaska, will be on the platform.

Harvard takes great poets and historians to fill its vacant professorships; Yale takes boys, who have proved their qualifications by getting their windows broken, as tutors. Gentlemen, members of the Board of Trustees, fill better the duties

of your priceless legacy. By the memories of Killingworth and Branford and Saybrook, by a glorious and historic past, don't, from a false dignity, let slip the future. Let in the young blood that warms the outer world—put in some alumni, and let that spirit of growth and progress that makes the Yalensian everywhere successful, be the baptism of Yale itself.

Mr. Phelps's speech caused great excitement and elicited constant applause. At its close, the meeting broke up, and Young Yale gathering outside the Alumni Hall cheered and congratulated Mr. Phelps, while representative men of the last fifteen years exclaimed that their class stood by what he had said, and that the ice was at last broken.

Mr. Phelps, in fact, made the speech of the whole commencement; he expressed the wishes and aims of the younger alumni, who take a lively interest in the future of Yale, and who have been too long excluded from its management. His speech went to the hearts of this large and important class, and, as many said, "broke the ice" for them.

The movement thus intrepidly launched met with a storm of opposition, ably led by Rev. Dr. Leonard Bacon, who cleverly responded to the rôle of "Rev. Timothy Pickering of Squashville." The agitation was carried on vigorously, undaunted by the opposition it encountered. The discussion cropped out at every meeting of Yale men and was continued with some acerbity in newspapers and periodicals. Naturally Mr. Phelps was frequently misquoted both by friend and foe and the public letters of Dr. Bacon were trenchant and biting in their sarcasm of the young reformers. Nevertheless, Young Yale halted not, but was rather spurred on to greater efforts to accomplish their object. Mr. Phelps with his great executive ability and powerful influence rallied support in the next State legislature, which amended the charter. It was done with such haste, however, that it was found

necessary to make a further amendment in the following legislature.

It may be stated here that Dr. Bacon and Mr. Phelps afterwards became united on another issue when the learned clergyman published an open letter to Mr. Phelps which attracted much attention, discussing the currency question and commending Mr. Phelps's position thereon. It should also be mentioned that even in the heat of the Young Yale struggle Mr. Phelps tried to keep his true attitude clearly before his colleagues and fellow-alumni. With this purpose he wrote a letter from Germany to the Rev. Mr. Jos. Twichell, who read it at the commencement dinner of the alumni in 1871. He said:

You will remember that I made last Commencement an after-dinner speech, which afterwards became the text for discussion in the daily, weekly, and quarterly press. In this discussion what I said and wished has, as you know, been greatly misrepresented; but I have been silent, believing that the individual is nothing, the cause everything, and finding all needed encouragement in its rapid growth and progress.

It is a great disappointment to me that I cannot be with you now; for after a year's silence I think I might justly claim a right to vindicate myself, at least within the walls of Alumni Hall, against the various charges made or insinuated against me, namely:

That I despised the Christian ministry, and wished to drive its members from the corporation;

That I had personal antipathy against certain members of the corporation and faculty, and held them up to ridicule;

That I censured and found fault with the management of the College funds;

That I did not know what I wanted, etc.

These were the main charges, and to them I plead "Not guilty."

I believe the minister's profession is the highest calling of man, and that, as a class, those who follow it are the best of men.

I believe that religion itself is the supreme and only good in

this life, and I would rather that Yale College should cease to exist than exist under a spirit hostile to Christianity. But I do not think it inconsistent with this respect for religion and its teachers that I should believe:

That there are men not in the pulpit who love Christianity;

That there are men not in the pulpit who love ability and learning;

That there are men not in the pulpit who, by reason of a wider experience, have the pre-eminence in other branches which the clergyman has in theology.

I sincerely regret that my remarks of last year were supposed to have any personal bearing, for I certainly had no intention to reflect upon any individual, and was no less surprised than grieved that any one should have so misconstrued them.

I have never alluded to the financial management of the college; I have not the slightest doubt, however, that its money has been kept with scrupulous honesty, and without what is popularly called "loss," and yet I think it might be shown, if necessary, that if the funds had been managed by men trained to finance, the curators would have more to boast of than that they had simply kept the talent entrusted to them.

There were many who pretended to doubt what young Yale wanted. This pretence has recently been dropped, and her cry is so loud and distinct that no one now misunderstands it. Her alumni, scattered throughout the Union, ask that Yale shall not be governed solely by clergymen, however worthy, of a single denomination in a single State. They ask that some of their number from other States and other professions shall be placed where they may give counsel and participate in the control.

To give the alumni a representation is the only method to attract their interest and aid, and to hold the college in the proved pre-eminence it has occupied for a century.

Remember me to all the Fellows, my friends, whether they inquire after me or not, and accept my earnest wishes that the alumni festival may be bright and cheerful, with lasting good for old Yale. Ever sincerely yours,

Wm. Walter Phelps.

Kissingen, Germany, June 26th, 1871.

The amended charter constituted the corporation of the President and eighteen Fellows: ten representing by succession the founders and original trustees of the institution; the Governor and Lieutenant-Governor representing the State of Connecticut; and six representing the graduates from all departments of the university, elected by alumni of not less than five years' standing, one of the six going out every year, but eligible for re-election.

The first election under the new charter took place in 1872, and naturally Mr. Phelps was made a candidate by his supporters in the reform movement. The most distinguished Yale men in the country were also put in the field as candidates for the six new places. A vigorous canvass was conducted among the electorate all over the country and the factional disputes which marked the reform agitation were carried into this campaign. Mr. Phelps, however, was elected one of the six by a heavy vote, his associates all being men of distinction.

Mr. Phelps was re-elected successively without opposition and served the Yale corporation as trustee with earnestness and ability until 1886. When his term was about to expire that year, several aspirants for the honor entered the field. Mr. Phelps was indifferent about re-election, and only consented to be regarded as a candidate after persistent urging by his friends, some of these being the most prominent men in the college. During this period of indifference and inaction on his part, one of the candidates made assiduous efforts to further his own election and he became an aggressive opponent to Mr. Phelps, whose friends and hundreds of the alumni who appreciated his services then began to make a somewhat vigorous canvass. All the tactics that could be decently used in such a contest were employed against Mr. Phelps, and the Yale reform contest, not yet quite forgiven by all of the old Yale adherents, doubtless contributed some aid to the opposition. The contest received a good deal of attention from the newspapers throughout the country.

In an interview in the New York *Tribune*, Chauncey M. Depew, then president of the New York Alumni Association, was quoted as follows:

I received a notification some time ago from the secretary of the Yale corporation, to the effect that I had received twenty-five votes for nomination as Fellow of the College, in place of William Walter Phelps. That made me, under the rules, a candidate, unless I declined. I refused to stand, because I thought Mr. Phelps should be his own successor. Very few among the living graduates of Yale have taken as deep and intelligent an interest in the welfare of the college as he. Many years ago, Mr. Phelps originated the movement to have young Yale represented in the government of the college, and its success aroused and kept alive an interest all over the country, which has since become a conspicuous feature in the support and liberalization of the institution. There is no one, too, among the surviving members of the alumni who has done so much toward the financial prosperity of the university. Besides that, there are always at least two students at Yale who owe their ability to continue their studies to his generosity, and he has shown his faith in the faculty and in the superiority of the present instructors and present methods of instruction by sending there both his sons.

The election was watched with the greatest interest. When the ballots were counted it was found that Mr. Phelps was more popular than even his friends anticipated, and it was a great triumph for them, as the vote he received was nearly equal to the combined vote of all his opponents. Thus Mr. Phelps was continued in the position he had honorably filled so long in the government of the institution he loved and cherished so dearly all his life.

After all these years of Yale's growth and prosperity under the new and progressive management which was instituted in 1872, it is wholly unnecessary now to seek arguments to show that the change in the government,

which was due largely to the efforts of Mr. Phelps, was highly beneficial to the institution. The venerated ex-President Dwight, in a letter recently written, said, in referring to this change: "I think the election of trustees by the graduates has given very general satisfaction to the friends of the university; and the introduction of graduates chosen by their fellow-graduates is believed to have awakened in a much greater measure the continued sympathy of Yale men." Could there be any better authority? There is also the testimony of numbers of other distinguished friends of Yale to the same effect. A graduate of Yale, whose family has done much for that institution and has himself reflected credit upon it by his eminence in the religious work of the world, says of this movement: "More and far better results grew out of it than its promoters ever anticipated."

At the expiration of his term as a Fellow of the University in 1892, Mr. Phelps was filling the German mission and most positively declined to be a candidate for re-election, although urged by several of the faculty and many of those most interested in the prosperity of Yale to continue his services. One of the leading journals of Connecticut said at that time:

> The time has passed when a great collegiate institution has simply educational functions. It has to handle and invest large sums of money coming to it by bequest or subscription. It builds new buildings, purchases real estate, is obliged to care for the housing and feeding of hundreds of young men; furnishes them opportunities for gymnastic exercises and out-door recreation; gathers them together at religious, social, and oratorical meetings, as well as for the studies of the college curriculum.
>
> The drift of sentiment at Yale lately has been plainly towards men of first-rate business qualifications for trustees rather than "figure-heads." Those who have studied the needs of the institution are united in their demand that each of these trustees' chairs shall be filled by a man who will be on hand regu-

larly for work. Better a man of only ordinary capacity, with zeal and faith and above all regular attendance, than a bright star who has consented to have his name appear in the catalogue as a Fellow, but who never does a stroke of real work for the progress of the college community which he represents.

The Hartford *Post*, which has always been foremost among the newspapers of Connecticut in promoting the welfare of the colleges and educational institutions of the State, referred to the Yale election in these terms:

The next vacancy in the board of Yale trustees will be caused by the expiration of the term of Hon. William Walter Phelps of New Jersey. The *Post* is able to make the announcement that Mr. Phelps will not be a candidate for re-election. This will doubtless be a great disappointment to his host of friends throughout the country, who of course have renominated him, and to the Faculty of the University, some of whom have urged him to run again. For we may say, without exaggeration, that the Academic and Scientific departments have never had a more loyal, generous, or devoted friend and helper than William Walter Phelps. The present representation of alumni upon the official board of the university—a long step forward in progress and a system which has been copied by many other colleges—was inaugurated largely owing to Mr. Phelps's wise foresight and practical energy some twenty years ago, when Connecticut used to be represented as a matter of form by its six senior senators. By the change the State lost nothing while the college gained much.

From 1872 to the term of his ministry to Germany, Mr. Phelps has been a very regular and active attendant at the regular Fellows' meetings. He has always sought to make them more than matters of form. The policy which he has advocated has been a broad and liberal one, worthy of Yale's claim as our greatest national university. We believe that Mr. Phelps could easily be elected for another term, notwithstanding it would be his fourth. But at the present time there is no prospect of his return to this country and he is right in standing for the principle that until the board of trustees is

further enlarged—which ought to be and we presume will be done at no distant date, for circumstances are annually demonstrating its necessity—each one of the six men elected to represent the alumni should attend all the present meetings and have more frequent ones.

Other Connecticut journals referred to this affair in the same strain and the Hartford *Courant* said:

Mr. Phelps was the moving force in securing the alumni representation on the corporation and was one of the first trustees chosen. Until he went abroad he was an active force in that body.

The following is from the *Press* of Paterson, N. J., the editor of which, Mr. Wurts, always took a warm interest in Mr. Phelps's Yale work, and whose son was a graduate of that institution:

William Walter Phelps, the American Minister at Berlin, who has been for twenty years one of the alumni representatives in the Yale corporation and ardently devoted to the interests of the University, some time ago, as stated in the *Press*, addressed the secretary of the college, declining to be a candidate for re-election. Many friends of the college, appreciating the value of his services to their Alma Mater, have been urging him to reconsider his decision. A dispatch has been received from him stating that, while his interest in Yale is unabated, his long term of service and his absence from the country have prompted him to this decision.

There were several candidates for this vacancy, but Judge Henry H. Howland, an eminent lawyer of New York City, whose election was favored by Mr. Phelps, was easily chosen.

President Dwight of the university opened his published report in 1892 with reference to Mr. Phelps:

Mr. Phelps was one of the first six gentlemen who were elected by the graduates for membership in this body in the

year 1872, when, in accordance with the request of the corporation, an act of the legislature of the State was passed allowing such a selection to be made. By the allotment which was then arranged among the new members, a term of two years was assigned to him. His first period of service accordingly came to its end in 1874, but he was then re-elected for a full term of six years, and a similar re-election took place in 1880, and again in 1886. The public duties to which he was called, in 1889, as Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States Government to the German Empire have necessitated his absence from the country nearly all of the time since that date. He has thus been prevented, within this period, from taking the active part which he could have wished, and the importance of which he appreciated, in the administrative affairs of the institution. But he has at no moment lost sight of its interests or failed to keep in mind its prosperity and success.

Mr. Phelps always held the presidents of Yale during his time—Woolsey, Porter, and Dwight—in high esteem and delighted to do them honor whenever an occasion presented itself. This feeling of respect and friendship was fully reciprocated by these worthy men and distinguished scholars. In 1885 he gave a great reception at his residence in Washington in honor of President Porter, who was on a visit to that city. It was a notable affair to which were invited all the Yale graduates located in or around Washington or who were visiting the national capital. Senators, members of the House, and other officials were among the number, and President Arthur and Mr. Blaine were among the especially invited guests. Old college days and incidents were recalled; old college songs sung, and it was a jovial time, long remembered by those who were present.

President Porter retired in 1886, after a service of forty years as a professor and afterwards president of Yale College. At the alumni dinner given in January of that year, at which the retiring president was the guest of honor, Mr. Phelps, who could not be present, sent a

letter from Washington, in which, among other things, he wrote:

I solace myself with the thought that I am sure to be pleasantly missed by my old friends and possibly by an older—the distinguished guest in whose honor the dinner is given. I suspect he knows I should have to shock his modesty; for who, who knows so much of his page of the college history as I, could say anything and not allude to the continual, healthy, and permanent growth which Yale College has made under President Porter?

To an increase in the number of students, which is thirty-three per cent.—in the first year of his presidency they numbered 809, this year they number 1076, and this increase is regular; in the first five years the average for each year was 950, in the second five years 1028, in the third five years 1078. To an increase in the number of instructors—he found 71; he leaves 114. Nor has it been only a growth of men. There has been an increase in funds. President Porter found $1,227,305 in the treasury; he will leave $2,155,705—an increase of over seventy-five per cent. And he will leave, besides, contingent inchoate rights to property that are estimated at more than $2,000,000. These are facts and figures. And as for the influence of Yale College in Church and State, law, business, medicine, and society, was it ever greater? Has it in this, the highest test, a rival? May not the most enthusiastic friends of the college content themselves with the wish that under his successor Yale College may prosper materially and morally, as it did under the reign of President Porter, the wise and good?

President Porter was succeeded in the presidency by Rev. Dr. Timothy Dwight, one of the professors. While the new president was in Washington in 1887, the alumni residing in that city gave him a complimentary dinner, at which many celebrated people were present. Mr. Phelps was one of the selected speakers, and the following is a report of his address which appeared in the Washington *Star:*

Mr. Phelps spoke to the toast of "Yale Characteristics," alluding to the peculiar loyalty with which all Yale men cling to their college, of the college feeling between classmates which expanded and included all alumni, and dwelling at most length on the variety in men, in their characters and occupations, which the catalogue of Yale graduates exhibited, and said:

"Why this little gathering at Chamberlin's is itself an illustration of Yale's variety and Yale's success in that variety. Is it a question of jurisprudence? There is the Chief Justice of the Supreme Source of American Law (Fuller), and by his side his white-haired colleague (Strong), about whom an intelligent people has not yet made up its mind whether his learning is the greater or his virtue. Is it a question of statesmanship? Here is a Senator so loved by Democrats and Republicans in his own State that he is called 'Our Evarts.' And here he seems always to have been. He was here counsel for a President in, who did not want to be put out; here, counsel for a President out, who wanted to get in; here, Attorney-General for one President; here, Secretary of State for another President; and now here, the only representative the imperial city of New York has sent to the United States Senate since the days of Alexander Hamilton. And now may his stay here be long and unbroken as his longest sentence."

Mr. Phelps continued, making humorous allusions to the various distinguished alumni of the Washington association. He thought Secretary Whitney looked very natty and clean for an old tar constantly engaged in scraping barnacles from the navy. He said the best illustration that Yale's training applied at the same time would fit different recipients for different fates was, that there was Professor Marsh, Captain Dutton, and himself in the same class. Marsh was now president of the National Academy, a great scientist; Dutton was a gallant soldier, who had conquered the volcanoes; and Phelps was nothing but a poor Jersey politician.

In conclusion, Mr. Phelps, turning to President Dwight, said: "This is only a glance at the glories of the trust so recently committed to you. As one who, as a trustee, is directly responsible for this transfer, I declare here the satisfaction and

pride with which I review my actions. It has been ratified by the large constituency I represent with enthusiastic unanimity, a unanimity as remarkable as that with which the Board of Fellows representing Old Yale and Young Yale and Middle-aged Yale, representing New York, which criticises everything Yalensian, and New Haven, which approves everything Yalensian, at the first ballot put upon your shoulders the gown once worn by Stiles and Clapp and Day and Woolsey and Porter. And by this action history shall repeat itself; or rather Providence, in the interest of pure Christianity and sound learning, shall force history to record that in the beginning of the nineteenth century Yale College and in the beginning of the twentieth century Yale University was under the efficient and successful administration of Timothy Dwight."

CHAPTER XXIX

Koppay's Historical Painting of Phelps and Bismarck—The Minister also Depicted on Canvas by Carl Gutherz—His Work on the Bench—Dedication of Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument at New Brunswick—His Reception at the Hamilton Club—Elected an Honorary Member of the Chamber of Commerce—His Portrait in the New Jersey Capitol

ALTHOUGH Judge Phelps had made the sincere announcement that he no longer desired political preferment, he was too prominent a figure in the public eye to be allowed to disappear. Shortly after the reception given him by his Englewood friends in July, 1893, he received a compliment of a somewhat different character, originating on another continent. Attention was called, by the publication in *Harper's Weekly*, to a picture taken from Koppay's historical painting then on exhibition in Berlin, of Mr. Phelps as American Commissioner discussing the Samoan treaty with Prince Bismarck. This picture was announced by the foreign art critics as possessing a high historical value. Unfortunately this valuable painting was destroyed by a fire, which occurred a few years since, in the present Phelps mansion at Teaneck. *Harper's Weekly* published its copy of the painting with this introduction:

The portraits of Hon. William Walter Phelps and Prince Bismarck, which have recently been completed by Koppay, are now on exhibition in Berlin, and will shortly be sent to New York for exhibition also. The painting from which the

illustration in this number is taken is a very large canvas, both figures being full-length and nearly life-size, and it is said to be one of Koppay's most successful pieces of work. It will have a peculiar interest to all Americans for several reasons, and will be sure to attract considerable attention when it arrives in this country. Herr Koppay is probably the most famous of German portrait-painters to-day, and he is said to have painted more "crowned heads" than any other living artist, except possibly Angeli of Vienna. Originally one of Lenbach's pupils, he has fairly outstripped his master. He works quickly, sketching the heads from life—Mr. Phelps's having been drawn just previous to his return to America,—and then transfers them to the canvas, magnifying the strong features almost to caricature, and leaving the finishing touches to a less famous but more painstaking artist.

The painting is complete in itself, of course, but it is also a forerunner of the great picture of the Samoan Conference which Koppay is now at work upon. The Conference sat at Berlin in 1889 under the presidency of Count Herbert Bismarck, the Prince's son, who then held the position of Imperial Minister of Foreign Affairs. Mr. Phelps was the chief commissioner for the United States; and Prince Bismarck, though he did not himself take part in the sittings of the Conference, followed the whole matter very closely from day to day, and often invited either the whole Conference or individual members to his famous Radziwill Palace, at 76 Wilhelmstrasse, almost across the way from the *Auswärtige Amt*, where the sittings were held.

During the course of the proceedings Mr. Phelps and he became fast friends, and the incident of Koppay's picture represents one of the many friendly visits which Mr. Phelps made to the Chancellor's palace. The two used to sit together, or walk about the fine old hall, discussing the progress of the Conference, the Chancellor's two immense and well-known hounds following them about wherever they went. Koppay has caught them all at a moment when Mr. Phelps has apparently just finished an earnest discussion of some detail of the treaty. Bismarck, with his hand on one hound's head, is on the point of making a reply after a moment's reflection,

with the fixed look in his eyes of one who is still thinking of his coming remark.

When Mr. Phelps settled in Berlin afterwards as American Minister to Germany, this friendship with Bismarck was renewed and strengthened, and the painting, while it is suggested by the Conference over the question of Samoa, is also a monument to the keen friendship of these two distinguished men.

A few weeks later there was placed in the Corcoran Gallery of Fine Arts, Washington, a remarkable picture intended to commemorate a very striking passage in American history. The subject is a scene from an important diplomatic episode in which the United States bore a part—that of the Bering Sea Tribunal of Arbitration between this country and Great Britain, which sat in Paris from April to June, 1893. Mr. Phelps, then through with his German mission, but before returning home, had been called upon by the Washington authorities to defend the claims of the United States in opposition to the ablest English lawyers.

This picture is the work of Carl Gutherz, a native of the United States who had lived and studied in Paris for many years. The canvas is about ten feet by six, and very rich in coloring, the scene being laid in a magnificent room in the building of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where the sittings of the Arbitration were held.

The moment chosen by the artist is when Mr. Phelps, the leading American counsel, is addressing the tribunal. He stands immediately in front of Baron De Courcel, the president; Justice Harlan and Senator Morgan, the American arbitrators, appearing at the left of De Courcel. The chief British counsel, Lord Charles Russell, has just risen at the right of Mr. Phelps, apparently for the purpose of interposing an objection. On either side are attachés, counsel, correspondents, and distinguished spectators,—ladies and gentlemen who were in daily attendance, for the most part Americans. The portraits and

figures of the Amerian arbitrators and Mr. Phelps are excellent, and the picture holds a place as a masterpiece of historic art.

In July of this year also, a very graceful national event occurred in Edinburgh, Scotland, which was the unveiling, with appropriate ceremonies, of a statue of Abraham Lincoln. It was erected in honor of the Scottish-American soldiers who fought for the Union in the American War of the Rebellion, and who returned to their native land where they were buried with no mark to their graves. The monument originated with Mr. Wallace Bruce, then United States Consul to Edinburgh, and Mr. Henry K. Heath of Brooklyn. The city authorities gave a handsome site in Colton Hill Cemetery, and the monument was erected by aid of contributions from patriotic Americans. Mr. Phelps was one of the very first contributors to this fund and took great interest in the affair from first to last.

After the final adjournment, late in July, of the term of the Court of Errors and Appeals, in which Judge Phelps sat for the first time, he visited the State encampment of the New Jersey National Guard at Sea Girt, where he was the guest of Governor Werts, and where he was at home among officers and guardsmen, all of whom learned to know him. There and at Long Branch and other coast resorts in the vicinity, he met many old friends and acquaintances from New York and New Jersey and other places, who were summering at the seashore. Numerous inquiries were made of him about the Germans, especially of the characteristics of their public men, historical characters, and the royal family. He always talked well and what he told of men of national and international fame was charmingly related and drew the closest attention. Out of the newspaper quotations of these conversations probably grew the reports, widely circulated by the press, that Judge Phelps contemplated writing his personal recollections of the distinguished

personages he had met during his life, which would include most of the men of the world of marked ability with whom he had associated on terms of equality. One prominent journal said:

A book of this kind from Judge Phelps would certainly be a fascinating one. Few Americans, few men, indeed, of any nationality, have enjoyed such opportunities for studying eminent characters on both sides of the Atlantic, from what may be called the inside point of view, as Mr. Phelps. If it be true that he meditates adding a trip into the fields of authorship to the many-sided variety of his life, we sincerely trust that the intention will be carried out, as a record of personal reminiscences from his pen would be a rare treat. So long as Mr. Phelps was in the diplomatic service, of course his lips had to be sealed on shadowed topics of the deepest interest upon which he could if he chose shed a brilliant light. May we not hope that now, when he is a free man once more, he will meet what seems to be a reasonable demand that he shall tell what he knows and what we all want to know, about matters not merely personal but cosmopolitan? He could do much to give what is called "history" a direction from which ignorance, imagination, or prejudice would not be able hereafter to swerve it.

A newspaper published at the national capital expressed this view:

Hon. William Walter Phelps is reported to be on the verge of writing a book of reminiscences. If our ex-Minister to Berlin tells all he knows about public men and women, he will astonish the world, for Mr. Phelps's memory is so phenomenal as to be absolutely appalling. His present occupation is very congenial. Mr. Phelps has always loved the law, which would have been his profession had fortune been less kind.

Had Judge Phelps chosen to indulge in this pastime he probably would have been excelled by few writers in

ability to portray with vividness the personal characteristics of the men whom he had known. The newspaper reports of the summer of 1893 led a publishing house of distinction to persistent efforts to have him write a book of reminiscences, but he never for a moment had such an intention and could not be induced to entertain the suggestion.

Judge Phelps was in daily attendance at the November term of the court and found the duties very agreeable to him. He gave close attention to all the details and made himself familiar with all the routine and formalities. At the close of this term a New Jersey journal, whose editor had an unusual knowledge of court matters in the State, made this allusion:

> We have it on the very best authority that the new Judge has made a very favorable impression on his colleagues of the bench and the members of the bar. He shows excellent judgment and an intelligent grasp of the law as well as "sound horse sense" in his conclusions.
>
> Judge Phelps is a lawyer, a man of affairs, a man of wide and varied business experience, and his long public career has equipped him with a fund of special and general knowledge that would make him useful in any position.
>
> It is the opinion of all who know him that he is a valuable addition to the bench of the court of last resort of the State.

A special correspondent at Trenton of the Newark *Advertiser*, mentioned what seemed to be a singular fact, that an ex-Minister to Germany and a man of the highest and broadest culture, who had occupied so many high stations, should be there so regularly when the court was sitting, hearing dry arguments and lengthy legal disquisitions. The writer continued:

> I spoke to Judge Phelps coming from the court-room, when he said, in that easy, graceful manner that always evokes admiration: "Is n't it curious that I should sit right next to

Judge Leon Abbett all the time? We have been political opponents for years, and perhaps, to a certain extent, political rivals. Yet here we are, as chummy and friendly as you please. The funniest part of it all is that in the months we have presided together we have always agreed on the points presented and in the decisions rendered. Our unanimity of judgment is quite remarkable. The ex-Governor seems to like his position. He is alert and active, when it was supposed, after the series of political disappointments he encountered, he might be sullen and disgruntled, but he is cheerful and fond of his work."

"How do you like the position of Judge?" was asked.

"Well, I find it rather laborious. It is not the motions and the long arguments I mind so much. But I am trying to think up the law that for thirty years I thought out of my mind. You see I paid no attention to the law for years, being occupied with other matters. Now I am compelled to try and recall what I once knew and apply it to the facts as presented."

Mr. Phelps tells a good story of his career as a lawyer. He had the large estate to handle that was left by his father. His counsel was Jacob Vanatta, a famous lawyer years ago, and Attorney-General of New Jersey in 1875. Phelps was interested in a railroad in this State, but he kept his connection secret. His counsel was not aware of it. Opposition to some of the plans of the company suddenly arose, and Mr. Vanatta was retained by the opposition.

"I heard one day," says Mr. Phelps, "that an important motion and argument were to be made by Vanatta the next day. There was no time to hunt up counsel. I concluded to defend the road myself. So I studied up the law on the subject as best I could, and the next morning presented myself in court. Vanatta made his argument, little suspecting what I was there for. When he finished, I got up and made my speech."

"Did you win the case against your counsel?"

"I did," laughingly replied the Judge.

Ex-Senator Large, of Hunterdon County, came along in time to hear Mr. Phelps tell the above story, and as it was concluded, he remarked:

"Yes, and I can tell you something about it. Vice-Chancellor Van Fleet narrated the instance to me one time, and said that he was present in the court-room at the time. He saw you get up, and after you got started he became interested in your manner and the cleverness of your argument. The more you talked, the more interested he became. He said it was one of the most enjoyable addresses he had ever heard. Never having seen you, nor, I believe, heard of you, he inquired your name of a friend. When told, he said you would make your mark."

Two characteristics of Mr. Phelps are well brought out in the foregoing quotation—his entire freedom from partisan resentment, and his self-reliance, indulged in often to perverseness and seeming recklessness.

On November 15th an imposing Soldiers' and Sailors' monument was dedicated at New Brunswick. The ceremonies were elaborate and there was a great civic and military display. Judge Phelps was one of the speakers and he began his address in his accustomed easy and humorous style, saying that New Brunswick was the easiest to pass through and the hardest to stop at of any city in New Jersey. The politicians wanted to reach Trenton and Washington, the business man New York or Philadelphia. Judge Phelps, sometimes politician, sometimes business man, had suffered under both conditions, but he always looked out when he went through, and he always thought of all New Brunswick's good things and bad things. After alluding to some of the well-known politicians living in that city, he launched out seriously, saying:

It is a credit now, and it will be a greater one as the years roll by to link one's name with any effort to spread and perpetuate the fame of the soldiers and sailors who killed secession. Under the apple tree at Appomattox they buried the only enemy that ever was or could be strong enough to strangle the national life. The conflict of those who on one side found

in the nation and on the other side in the State their country was the conflict of patriotism itself. For that we could fight each other.

We shall quarrel, and our sons and grandsons shall quarrel, over different questions of policy, but we shall not fight. We fought in the Rebellion, not for policies, but for the country —the one side believing the State was his country, the other side the nation. All questions less than that of the existence of our country American citizens—always patient, always law-abiding, always believing in the final efficacy of moral forces —will settle on the platform, not on the field—by ballots, not by bullets.

To-day some of us differ, and earnestly, on important questions. Can you imagine the American people going to war with each other on these questions? Can you imagine them fighting each other on any question—the question of union and disunion being settled forever?

So the soldiers and sailors of the republic fought better than they knew, when they put a bloody but final injunction on the heresy that any star might at will leave our galaxy, shoot itself into darkness, and so, piecemeal, blot out the light and glory of the heavens. They assured to us liberty and peace for all time by assuring to us immunity from the only danger that threatened our national existence. For this, the soldiers and sailors of New Jersey fought, to whom to-day we consecrate this monument. Let them sleep in peace and honor. They died that liberty and union might live.

The annual dinner of the Chamber of Commerce in New York is always an event of importance. The orators on each occasion are limited to a small number, invited from the professional men, scholars, and statesmen of the day. The audiences they address are composed chiefly of notable merchants and financiers of the city. Judge Phelps was chosen to speak at the dinner on the 21st of November, 1893. A conspectus of his address is taken from the newspaper reports of that entertainment. On being introduced by President Charles S. Smith as a

"scholar and philosopher as well as a business man," Judge Phelps said:

I thank you, Mr. President, that you have at last found time to say those kind things of me. When I met you on your trip you seemed too busy to say them to me. Indeed, you were so anxious to get rid of me that I thought at first you feared I wanted to borrow money of you. But when I noticed the book you carried, I made up my mind you were simply preoccupied. I could n't help reading the title; you carried it as if you wanted me to. It was *Their Wedding Journey*.

Of course you did n't remember. It was at Naples, and the sight of you made me very homesick. And yet it was n't you so much; it was the Chamber of Commerce that, in your person, was making the circuit of the earth. As you walked quickly away, leaving the odors of Ceylon and the East behind you, I no longer saw the smoke of Vesuvius nor the haze of Capri. I saw only the old Chamber in William Street; the historic gatherings whose minute guns roused the nation when anything on rebel field or legislative floor threatened the public weal; the procession of noble presidents, all of whom since Pelatiah Perrit have been my personal friends; and even these dinners. I saw this table, with its victims waiting the hour of electrocution, and more unhappy than the condemned, for they doubt, and we know, that the operation will be a painful one. In short, gentlemen, I thought so much of you all that I grew homesick, and when I came back I found all other things so changed that I never felt quite sure until to-night that I was at home. But you are not changed. The Old Guard never surrenders, and the Chamber of Commerce never changes.

The speaker had evidently become impressed with the changed American conditions since the beginning of his political and public career, and among other changes he had noticed were these:

When I went away, a man read one newspaper of a morning and believed much that he read in it; now he reads as many

as he has time to, and believes nothing except the few things in which they all agree. I am not rash enough to trace the effect of this journalistic debauch upon the reader, who practises it daily—for journalists have heavy hands and are quick to use them on any critic,—but I am sure of its effect on the newspaper: it increases the circulation and diminishes its influence. Time was when the chief object of a great journalist was to lead and instruct public opinion. Now, with rare exceptions, he is content to follow public opinion and uses his best gifts to amuse or attack. There is but one logical conclusion to this ambition: the editor must make his journal personal. But what excuse is there for personal journalism, and what limit? With the appetite growing on what it feeds on, can it stop its downward trend until some triumphant Sunday issue prints the New York Directory, with a sketch and portrait for every name, and this ignoble competition dies of satiety?

Nevertheless, he found that newspapers of to-day were getting and printing all the news as that was never done before. As another change, he found that party spirit is not so strong. One manifestation of this was the discrimination of voters in crossing the names of bad candidates. He continued:

This indiscriminate reading of all newspapers has much to do with the change. People nowadays, reading all the papers, know who good candidates are, and have to have it out with their consciences if they vote for a bad one. I think here is another reason why party ties rest lightly. We are now far enough from the fires of the war to perceive that all policies which bear the party name are not of vital importance.

. . . . . .

But perhaps a third reason operates more strongly than any other in inducing men to vote independently, or, rather, for the best in men and measures selected from all parties. It is the discovery that a party organization nowadays is an immense and complicated machine; that in our eagerness to load the party with all attainable force, so that its momentum for a

good cause should become irresistible, we have created an organization compact and welded, which is irresistible also for harm.

Another change he found was in the popular regard for the United States Senate. Of this he said:

> Admiration is gone. In its place there is manifest in speech and opinion almost pity for a body, where wealth and party service of the lowest kind have filled so many seats, and where Senators have shown themselves incapable of transacting the ordinary business of an assembly. The time has ceased to be when dignity, character, and ability were quickest summed up in the phrase "a Senatorial figure."

He was glad to find that Americans are not worrying so much or working so many hours as they used to do—in the East, that is. He was struck with the procession of careworn faces at the Chicago Fair. He said as he looked at them he felt prouder than ever of his countrymen as possessing beyond all other peoples the noblest elements of manhood and womanhood. "But I felt that one thing was wanting—to drop care that made Martha worry unnecessarily over many things."

This frank and direct talk was highly enjoyed by those who heard it and evoked much applause. This address, so marked in its originality that when published it was numerously and variously criticised. It received the denunciation of one class of newspapers, but journals of the best repute admitted the justness of its strictures, and from the public, by whom it was largely read, came general approbation.

In his closing remarks the vigorous Americanism of the orator cropped out, and the last words that William Walter Phelps ever addressed to a public audience contained the following glowing and heartfelt tribute to his own country:

> Pardon me, gentlemen, if, in conclusion, I say that my four years' friendly residence among the nicest people of Europe

only confirms my impression, that God gave to us the best country in the world, and, in the fulness of time, filled it with the best people. And, after fifty years' study of my country and my countrymen, I hold the gift of American citizenship God's best gift, weighted though it be with the terrible responsibility of each citizen to see that such a republic receives no detriment.

There was a reception given to Judge Phelps on the evening of December 14th, by the Hamilton Club of Paterson, the leading social organization of that city. Although this complimentary demonstration originated with members of the Club, the affair was participated in by the leading men of the city, representing all departments of life,—law, finance, manufacturing, trade, and the professions. They wished to express their regard for him who had once represented them in the councils of the nation and was always loyal to the true interests of his constituents; who had afterwards filled other posts of honor, but who never forgot those who were his old and early friends. The reception was without politics, speeches, or formalities. When Mr. Phelps came, accompanied by Hon. Garret A. Hobart, there was no need of a formal introduction. Mr. J. E. Crowell the editor of the Paterson *Call*, in his report of the entertainment, said:

With the exception of a few out-of-towners everybody knew him, and it was simply "How d' ye do" here and "Good evening" there with this one and that one, just the same as if meeting on the street or in a railroad depot. Judge Phelps's memory for names is remarkable, and his customary salutation to those with whom he has been specially well acquainted is by addressing them by their Christian names in the most informal and intimate manner imaginable.

Judge Phelps has not changed very much since he was here before his departure for Germany, with the exception that his hair, formerly very dark, is decidedly gray—in fact, almost

white. Taking notice of this fact, the writer commented upon it.

"I have been gray," said Mr. Phelps, very gravely, "ever since Mr. Blaine died. That was one of the greatest blows of my life. Had it not occurred, I would not be gray-haired now. Had it happened sooner, I would have been gray-haired earlier. I attribute my gray hair to the shock caused by the death of my dear friend, James G. Blaine."

Judge Phelps seemed to really feel what he said, but after a momentary silence, during which a cloud could be seen to pass over his face, he lapsed into more pleasant topics and began to indulge in reminiscences of former visits to Paterson.

Every one present seemed to want to have a talk with Mr. Phelps, consequently a lively conversation was kept up, and the evening passed pleasantly to all, notwithstanding there were no oratorical accompaniments to the banquet. Nearly every one present bid the guest of the evening a cordial good-bye before he took his departure, and in this way ended the last public social gathering Mr. Phelps ever attended, and it was in a city that had adhered to him so steadfastly in all his Congressional contests, and had constantly felt an honest pride in his subsequent successful and honorable career.

The old-time home life was kept up in Teaneck in January and February, 1894, and there was much quiet entertaining of friends. Sleighing was good in January, and Judge Phelps took marked pleasure in driving over the new roads which he had recently constructed. His diary shows that he was enjoying the reading of the new books of the year and he wrote interesting criticisms of those that most attracted him.

In letter writing Judge Phelps was almost as happy as in conversation. Throughout all his busy life, and especially during his periods of rest at Teaneck, he gave much attention to personal correspondence with friends and intimate acquaintances. These letters,—from his own hands, —noticeable for their virile and upright chirography,

graphic in style, cheerful in tone, and full of pleasing personalities, could hardly fail to be welcomed and valued by all who received them. He never wrote a letter to a friend that was not interesting or that did not display some of his well-known characteristics.

Early in February the New York Chamber of Commerce elected Judge Phelps an honorary member. This was an unusual honor and he esteemed it highly. The Chamber has always been very exclusive in bestowing this distinction, and at that date only five men living bore it. Besides Judge Phelps, the New York Chamber of Commerce had never made but one citizen of New Jersey an honorary member—Mr. Edison, for services rendered commerce in the domain of science,—and now Mr. Phelps was honored for services in diplomacy. In his letter accepting this favor, Judge Phelps wrote:

> You have given me great pleasure in admitting me by this golden gateway to the official society of my father's friends and mine. It seems to me that those of my fellow-citizens with whom I have had the greatest intimacy were largely members of the Chamber of Commerce. Indeed, I remember in a speech at one of your banquets, I said I felt as much at home in the picture gallery of the Chamber of Commerce as if I were walking among the portraits of my friends.

The portrait of Judge Phelps was afterwards placed in this gallery, where that of his father had been for years.

An admirable portrait of Judge Phelps painted by Huntingdon the artist, has been placed by the New Jersey authorities in the rotunda of the Capitol at Trenton, among those of the governors and other prominent Jerseymen who served the State with distinction.

CHAPTER XXX

His Last Illness—Seeks Rest in the South—He Ends His Diary—Resigns His Last Public Appointment—His Fortitude in Sickness—His Daughter Hurries across the Ocean to His Bedside—A Peaceful Death

IN February Mr. Phelps's throat began to trouble him seriously, and resultant illness confined him to his home for many days. He took his seat, however, in the court at the beginning of the term soon after the 1st of March, and was in regular attendance until the final adjournment for that term, on the 28th of that month.

But it was noticed that the long sittings of the court had apparently become painful to him and that he was enduring their irksomeness with labored patience. A few days after he was released from the work of the session he went to the Hygeia Hotel, at Old Point Comfort, Virginia, a resort that had been restful to him. He was there but a short time when he sent a request to one who had been his secretary and political confidant to join him. It turned out that he wanted the companionship of some one who well understood him and knew when conversation would be agreeable to him, and when, owing to his condition, he wanted silence and seclusion. His friend, on reaching him, found a startling change. He was avoiding company and observation. Acquaintances of prominence in society, business, and the affairs of the country, some of whom he had associated with officially, were constantly coming and going from the hotel, but he shunned their recognition. This was little like his old

self, for he had always liked the broad and sunny thoroughfares of life, and it had never been his custom to sit in the dark corners. But now, one who had always mingled with his fellow-men in all walks of life, for the first time during his existence, was seeking seclusion. Yet he was neither morose nor melancholy, for the change was wrought by sheer physical inability to maintain formal conversation, and it was evident that disease which he inherited was at last making dangerous inroads upon his feeble system. It was then that he found himself unequal in strength and ambition to continue his diary. The last entry was made April 10, 1894. He probably never hated a human being. If he had, it would most certainly have been disclosed in his diary, where little that was even unpleasant was written of any one. It has been truly said: "There is always a superfluity of gall in a diarist's ink." There was never any of that with Mr. Phelps. Even the serious misfortune of constant ill-health after reaching manhood created in him no taint of bitterness regarding men and things. His philosophy, which he was now called to put into practice, was to take life as he found it with composure, and he felt it to be a man's part to accept with equanimity good days and evil days, and no one ever accepted the latter with more unflinching courage.

He was in the open air as much as possible, riding and sailing, hoping thereby to revive his waning vitality and stay his malady, but after a few weeks spent at Old Point Comfort without a sensible improvement in health he went to the Hot Springs of West Virginia. There society was lively and he met bright men and women who had known him in Washington and New York life. A temporary revival of physical strength brought out a little of his natural vivacity, but a recurrence of weakness compelled him to seek more of the quiet of his own apartments, where in occasional and quiet talks with his friend, who was yet with him, he would speak of the past, but

never of the future. He had doubtless come to realize that the close of his days could not be far away, and now that the bonds of ambition were entirely broken, he showed by his demeanor that he felt that pain and sorrow, and even death, need have no terrors for those who dare them and meet them bravely.

Finding no lasting improvement in health at the Hot Springs, Mr. Phelps sought his home at Teaneck, where he arrived May 18th. At once he received not only proficient medical aid, but treatment from most skilful surgeons and specialists of New York, who resorted to all the remedies medical science had devised. But the disease, which had developed into tuberculosis, involving the base of the brain and spine, steadily progressed. Mrs. Phelps, who was in Europe, was informed by cable of his danger, and hurried home to give him, after her arrival, every care and comfort.

All this time none could discern that he was enduring the tortures of disease unless they questioned him if he were suffering pain, so uncomplaining was his nature and so sturdy his fortitude in bearing physical agony.

Judge Phelps had been appointed by the Governor one of the Commission, created by the Legislature, to make a revision and amendments to the constitution of the State of New Jersey, which was to meet in the first days of June. It was proposed by members who had held consultation to make Judge Phelps the presiding officer of that body. He had lost sight of the time of meeting and was reminded by his former secretary that the commission would meet for organization in a few days. It was of course plain that he could not attend, and he said he would write a letter of resignation to the Governor. He rose weakly from his couch in his library and reached his desk, where, resting his face in both hands, he appeared unable to write. The secretary told him he would go at once to the Governor and tender the resignation verbally. Judge Phelps said, "I wish that you would," and then,

with a grateful look and the sweetest of smiles, reached out his hand feebly to his old and tried friend, and the two never saw each other again.

Governor Werts received the resignation with surprise, for it was not publicly known that Judge Phelps was so sick, and the announcement drew from the Governor expressions of disappointment and genuine sorrow. He did not fill Mr. Phelps's place in the commission.

A few days passed wearily and painfully, and after May 31st the invalid did not leave his bed. If he had ever indulged in fair illusions which had ended in defeated purposes and prostrated hopes, such disappointments did not cloud the clear sunshine of his closing days, for to the last hours of his perfect consciousness he was the same sweet-tempered and love-worthy man, friend, husband, and father.

His serious illness became known to the newspaper world. Reporters were daily on the alert to chronicle favorable or unfavorable symptoms. Letters and telegrams of inquiry and solicitude from every quarter poured in upon the family.

When the sick man came fully to realize there was no hope of recovery, he expressed pathetically a wish to look once more upon the face of his only daughter. At this very time she was hurrying with all the speed of modern travel to his bedside from Berlin to Cuxhaven to catch the first steamer leaving for her native land. She arrived at the Quarantine in New York harbor at daylight on June 15th. Arrangements had been made with the custom-house authorities to waive formalities and facilitate her landing. Her brother, Sheffield, awaited at Quarantine on a fast tugboat, the deck of which he had paced all night in anxious waiting for the arrival of her vessel. The worn and impatient traveller had anticipated the possibility of extraordinary preparations to hurry her to her New Jersey home, and she was all ready to disembark. After a few hurried words with the sorrow-worn

brother, she hastened over the ship's side, and her feet had scarcely touched the deck of the little vessel when it sped away in the early dawn. When the brother had left his father's bedside a few hours before, it was with the knowledge that the end was not far away, and with fear and misgivings the two travellers on the tug talked of reaching the dying father in time. The brother knew also that for several days the physicians had exercised all their skill to keep their patient alive until his daughter should arrive. For a week he had been unconscious except at brief intervals, and the nerves of the entire household were strained to their utmost tension. The boat landed at Fort Lee. Not a moment was lost in getting ashore and into an awaiting carriage, which was driven with all the speed of fast horses until the Teaneck home was reached at half-past seven. On the threshold the worst fears of the careworn daughter were almost realized. She was told that her father was not dead, but had sunk into a lethargy from which the doctors said he could hardly recover. So that now, after the heartsore and distressing trip across the Atlantic and the lightning race on the shore of home, the daughter had arrived to find that she was too late to hear any last words from her dying father. When she spoke, that he might understand that she had come, a feeble pressure of the hand, a mere tremor, told that he knew she was there, but this faint recognition was everything to her. It was the last gleam of departing intelligence from the dying man. This was on Friday. On the Saturday evening following, it was evident that all would be over before another sunrise, and a few minutes after one on Sunday morning, with all his family present, Mr. Phelps died so peacefully that those around him hardly knew when there had passed from earth the spirit of one who had lived

> "To make the world within his reach
> Somewhat the better for his being,
> And gladder for his human speech."

CHAPTER XXXI

His Funeral—A Day of Mourning in Englewood—Church Filled with People from All Ranks of Life—The Sermon—Estimates of His Life and Work by Many Writers

THE shock of Judge Phelps's death was felt in his county severely, and all over the State and country. Hundreds of messages of sorrow and condolence came from all sections, and a sense of public loss was genuinely felt and expressed.

The funeral was on Wednesday, June 20th. Early in the morning there was a brief service at the house, in the room where the body lay, the casket being covered with flowers, the gifts of the employees of the estate. Only the family and a few close friends were present. The services were conducted by Rev. James Eells, pastor of the Presbyterian Church at Englewood. He read a chapter of Scripture and, after a prayer, spoke for a few minutes of Mr. Phelps and his Christian character and the kindness and affection he had always shown to those in his employ. Then an opportunity was given for those present to look for the last time at the face of the dead, and all the older retainers filed slowly through the room and said a silent good-bye. The pall-bearers were those who had been assistants and employees of Mr. Phelps in various departments of his business,—those who knew him best,—which was in keeping with his simple life and tastes and his regard for all who had served him.

It was one of the most pleasant of June mornings when

the cortège with the mourners started for the church. The route for a large part of the way lay through the Teaneck estate, and over valley lands the dead master had spent a lifetime in beautifying, passing the ivy-clad ruins of his former mansion in which he had taken so much pride, along roads that he had made which were lined with trees, many of which he had planted with his own hands.

The scenes along the route were constantly suggestive of the passing away of one who had engrafted himself into the hearts of all who knew him. Flags everywhere were at half-mast upon lawns and private residences, and, reaching Englewood, the people on the streets stopped and reverently lifted their hats as the cortège passed. All the business places of the city were closed during the hour of the funeral.

The church and streets in the vicinity were crowded, and it seemed that almost all the State were present. Special trains came filled. They brought, among others, the Governor and State officials. The Judges of the Court of Errors and Appeals, the members of the Supreme Court of New Jersey, and the State Bar Association, each attended in a body. Many other organizations were represented. Farmers, mechanics, merchants, lawyers, journalists, scholars, soldiers, and statesmen—those in every sphere of the nation's activity—came to show their esteem for one whose death was felt to be a public calamity. Among those who grieved most deeply were the college classmates, some of whom came long distances to be present at these sad last rites. One of them, in placing a wreath of remembrance on his bier, said:

> Among the circle of friends who will sorrow that they will see his face no more on earth, none, next to his own household, will grieve more sincerely for Mr. Phelps than his classmates, who walked and talked with him, laughed and sang with him, studied and wrought with him, in the fellowship of

student life under the elms of New Haven. Alas! that his genial smile, his brilliant wit, his courtly manners, and Christian spirit will grace our reunions no more.

Rev. Mr. Eells officiated at the church. The services began by the singing of *Jesus, Lover of My Soul,* by a quartette, then there was the reading of an appropriate selection of Scripture. This was followed by the solo, *I Know that My Redeemer Liveth.* After prayer, the choir sang *Sun of My Soul, Thou Saviour Dear.* Then the pastor's words were these:

It is not as the Statesman, brilliant, worthy, renowned, not as the Representative, beloved and honored and wept for by his constituents to-day, not as the Judge nor as the Minister, that true American Minister of ours—not as such a one to-day have we come to do him honor. I am sure that you who have come from a distance have been speaking together of the friend that he was to you. And those of us who knew some little time ago that our friend was to be taken, began telling each other how much we should miss him and how much he meant to our town and to ourselves.

And it is that part—the irreparable part of his loss—that we have come to speak about, to think about and to honor to-day. The Statesman can be praised again, the Minister may do larger things than our friend at another time. There are men in God's keeping who are being kept for the time of their great need, as he was. But the friend and the citizen and the intimate one it is only given to us occasionally to know. When they go, our life is poorer till we shall find them again, and put them back in their places of honor and of love.

Thinking over the great characteristics of Mr. Phelps as a friend, there was that which came out most prominently, and that was his faithfulness. How true it was of him: "Faithful in that which is least, faithful also in much." How true, if you invert that saying: "Faithful in much, faithful also in the least."

Whether it be as an American, as a young Representative in our national Congress, daring to go against his party for the

sake of an honest and manly conviction, throwing his emphasis and doing all that his manly strength could enable him to do for his side of the Civil Rights bill, or coming to his home and entering the door, unknocked, of his humblest tenant, Mr. Phelps was the faithful man, always true to what he thought was right, always giving his power, his magnificent attainments and intellect and his winning way to what was right. "Faithful in that which was least; faithful also in much." Faithful at home and faithful abroad, faithful to the great men and faithful to the humble.

Mr. Phelps is to be remembered for that large, large faithfulness, and that was possible to him because of his simplicity. How genuine and simple he was! There are anecdotes that come to your minds, I know, as you sit here, and you remember the things that bring them up to your minds and you say: "For all of the honor that was given to him, for all of the wealth that was his, for all of the position and the friends, Mr. Phelps was simple; simple in his tastes, simple in his doings, in his words, in his actions." Always that deep simplicity that can never be changed.

We are told that he was always a stanch Republican. So he was, in the party way. But Mr. Phelps was democratic with that greatest of all democracies, manhood's sympathy with manhood. Shakespeare wrote, "None so poor to do him reverence." He should have added, None too poor that he should reverence. To that is to be attributed his wonderful success in a political way. The fact that he could meet men, bring them to himself, and hold them to himself, was of great value to him in his career. Ever that greatness of character, that simplicity, that faithfulness to them and to their interest with which he knew how to impress them.

He was generous in giving, generous not of money only, but in the way of giving, generous also of himself. Hardest of all things, he knew how to give liberally and upbraid not. It would be useless, it would be folly to speak of the great public deeds of Mr. Phelps, written as they are on history. It needs not the emphasis that we give at such a time as this to the best things a man did and the greatest things a man ever said lest they be interred with him. He needs no emphatic eulogy at

this time. But it is that earnest, genuine manliness that we shall miss, and it is that that has come to you that has made his name especially sad to-day, and it is that that has bound men fast to him. It is that which will be always identifying us in closer relation with our friend.

There is one other thing I must not fail to say. We wonder why Mr. Phelps left his political career. He had no wonder. He loved to be out and at work on his place. He loved to be there, caring for the things he loved, and the trees that he planted like "the trees of righteousness, round about." How he cared for them and how he loved them! He had told some of us early in the winter: "I am impatient for the spring to come, for I must be about my place and open new roads and make it more beautiful." And so he, who, in the love of Nature, had communion with her visible forms, spoke her varied language. In calm trust he could wrap the drapery of his couch about him and lie down to pleasant dreams. God take us with him in the morning's dawning.

The audience was deeply affected by Mr. Eells's remarks. At the conclusion of the address the choir sang the hymn, *Art Thou Weary? Art Thou Languid?* and then the benediction was pronounced.

The casket, accompanied by the pall-bearers, was conveyed directly to Fort Lee and across the river to a railroad station in upper New York City, and from thence by special train to Simsbury, Connecticut, the place of interment in the massive granite tomb of the Phelps family. When the funeral party arrived at Simsbury, a large number of citizens of that and other towns were gathered at the station and the cemetery to show their respect for one whose ancestors were born and lived among them. A short funeral service took place at the cemetery, conducted by Rev. Mr. Croft, after which the body was laid in its final resting-place. There the scholar, orator, statesman, and diplomatist, sleeps with his fathers, free from the commotion and strife of the world and the cares of men.

To publish the resolutions and testimonials of esteem that emanated from clubs, societies, boards of directors of corporations, and the many organizations with which Mr. Phelps was in some way connected, would be to go beyond the limits of this memorial. In the court of which he was a judge, besides the other testimonials to his worth, his vacant chair was draped in mourning.

In Berlin the intelligence of the demise of the much respected and popular ex-Minister was received with marked sadness, especially in diplomatic circles, and his memory was fitly honored there in the American Church.

New Jersey was the departed statesman's home, but the hundreds of memorials published in the newspapers of the whole Union show that he belonged to the nation, and it is perhaps better that his character and worth should now be measured in this larger perspective—removed from the bias and partiality natural to those whose ties of intimacy and affection bound them closely to him. To them his personality and career could never be the objects of cold, calculating criticism; to them his rare accomplishments and brilliant achievements were regarded with admiration and cherished with jealous pride; to them his unselfish toil and pure life, his manliness and sincerity of purpose, his bountiful generosity and magnanimity were best known and valued; to them he was a warm and sympathetic friend whose sunny nature ever shed encouragement and gladness and whose loss was irreparable.

As one of those whose friendship with Mr. Phelps was long and intimate, the writer of this memoir feels it unnecessary that he should look with a critic's eye over the life of his friend, or round out this chronicle with a closing summary. Instead, he gives the testimony of a number of writers who had unusual opportunities to observe Mr. Phelps's career from various standpoints. A few lines only can be given from each. The selection

is made from well-known journals and noted journalists who have expressed their estimate of Mr. Phelps as a man and the value of his life to the world:

New York Sun.

Mr. Phelps unaffectedly regarded public office as a public trust; and whether he was serving his country or his State, in the most conspicuous or the most modest station, the principle of his activity was the same. He was an honorable, clear-headed, high-minded man; and by his untimely death the nation has lost a good citizen.

Brooklyn Eagle.

He adhered to the highest standards. He had a taste for public life and achieved prominence in it, but not because of his millions. The possession of millions enabled him to do many things which helped to gratify worthy ambition, nor do they explain the regret with which the American public will hear of his demise.

New York Herald.

He built up a reputation that to-day caused every man, woman, and child for miles around his home to speak of his death with tear-dimmed eyes.

New York Mail and Express.

All who personally knew this generous and gifted man on both sides of the Atlantic,—the poor and the rich, the toiler and the thinker, will join hands over ocean and continent in a common grief.

New York Tribune.

He possessed a rich store of affection and sympathy on which all who knew him drew at will, with full assurance that their drafts would never be dishonored. Not on friends alone, but wherever he detected the need of assistance or of consolation, he bestowed the best gift in his keeping. He won in life the only reward he wanted, but the tribute of tears which would have grieved him must follow him to the grave.

New York Telegram.

William Walter Phelps's character and service as a statesman belong to his country, to which they are bequeathed, and are known to the world which they have enriched. The memory of his personality will be cherished by his friends—and who can number them?

New York Advertiser.

The death of William Walter Phelps takes away from us a man who can ill be spared. He was an example of the highest type of American citizen in public and private life, and his career in every respect is worthy of imitation.

New York Press.

Of his patriotism and personal worth it is needless to speak. These are matters of common knowledge. It is enough to say that in his death the United States loses an eminent citizen, who in every station he filled reflected honor upon the Republic.

New York Evangelist.

The descendant of a family distinguished in this country from Colonial days, the heir of great wealth and high social position, he always looked upon his privileges as so many opportunities to serve his fellow-men.

The Nation.

It seemed natural to Mr. Phelps to interest himself in all matters which concerned the public welfare.

New York Town Topics.

Mr. Phelps had every incentive that can be given to a man to lead a life of luxurious and artistic ease. He had decided artistic and literary tastes and he was never vigorous of body, and yet so strong was his sense of what a man in his position owed to the community that his whole life was one of strenuous exertion in every cause and every movement for reform.

New York Recorder.

He left no opportunity for good unutilized.

Brooklyn Standard.

The high cultivation of Mr. Phelps, his intimate acquaintance with the history of Europe, his knowledge of languages, his familiarity with the manners and customs

of polite people, the grace there was in his speech and the soft touch he knew how to give with a firm hand, qualified him for diplomatic service, and when he was Minister to Vienna and Berlin, he was not merely an unreproachable representative of his country, but one who was honored in his individuality and held in high favor at those courts.

Philadelphia Telegraph.

The career of Mr. Phelps will be an inspiration to every one striving to reach a high ideal. He never lowered his dignity in or out of the House, or in the diplomatic world to please the groundlings. The death of this worthy man has been made the subject of unusual comment among the best-informed journals and public men, and there are substantial reasons for this.

Philadelphia Record.

By the death of William Walter Phelps the country has lost one of its brightest, most active, and best-informed public men. Although an ardent Republican, he was independent in judgment and action.

Philadelphia North American.

His life was dotted by achievements which proved him to be a man of exceptional ability. The world is better because he lived in it. Would that there were, especially among those in active political life, many more like him than there are.

Philadelphia Ledger.

He was a man of advanced thought.

Lancaster (Pa.) Examiner.

If Congress and the executive places of the land had more men like Mr. Phelps in public service, the whole line of our politics and policies would take such a turn that the world would be amazed and our happiness and prosperity become the wonder of the age.

Baltimore Herald.

Mr. Phelps was at one time a conspicuous Republican leader, and as a member of Congress and as the American Minister to Austria and Germany he displayed the highest qualities of statesmanship and diplomacy. As a citizen and as a man Mr. Phelps was beloved by all.

Newark (N. J.) News.

The cares and honors of official life wrought no change in the personality of Mr. Phelps. He was essentially a social man. Ever accustomed to the refinements which great wealth brings, and reared in an atmosphere peculiar for a certain exclusiveness, this distinguished son of New Jersey was always in sympathy with his fellow-man, however humble his lot. He was always approachable, always ready to lend a sympathetic ear to those in trouble, ever solicitous about his friends, and never indifferent to the affairs of those who might be classed as not his friends.

Trenton (N. J.) Gazette.

The life of strenuous endeavor and self-sacrificing labor of William Walter Phelps was in notable contrast to the useless life led by some of the favorite sons of fortune. He lost nothing in any way by living a life of labor and usefulness instead of giving himself up to the indolence of wealth. And he had the respect and admiration of the world.

Elizabeth (N. J.) Herald.

Very few public men have left a grander record behind them than that bequeathed to posterity by William Walter Phelps. Editors all over the land, of every known political hue, sect, race, or condition, have nothing but eulogy for the departed scholar and statesman.

Paterson (N. J.) Press.

One of his characteristics was his habit of never speaking ill of dignitaries or any one else. Very rarely was Mr. Phelps ever heard to speak a word in derogation of man or woman. A dash of sub-acid persiflage, or gleam of polished satire, was the nearest he would approach to punishment even of a personal or political adversary.

Sussex (N. J.) Independent.

In the death of Mr. Phelps this nation has lost one of its grandest sons. He was a large-hearted, cultured gentleman, tender and sympathetic as a woman, lavish in his benevolence, always good to the poor and kind to the unfortunate, with ever an encouraging word for all things for the betterment of mankind.

Paterson (N. J.) Call.

The world is made poorer by his removal, but he leaves behind an example worthy of emulation—that of an upright and pure-minded citizen, whose creed might be summed up in the few words "Do unto others as you would that they should do unto you."

Chicago Record.

Some of his speeches stand as models of scholarship, logic, and oratory. But it was in diplomacy that he made his greatest success. He had great tact, was shrewd and accurate in his penetration of other men's minds and motives, and had a power of persuasion that was seldom surpassed. Prince Bismarck once said that Mr. Phelps was the most agreeable and the cleverest American he had ever known. The great German Chancellor never liked nor praised weak men, whether they were for him or against him.

Chicago Herald.

His regard for what he deemed the right separated him from his party on several occasions. He could not be whipped into line against his convictions, and his detractors unjustly charged him with Pharisaism when he was really conscientious.

Cincinnati Gazette.

He had a vast store of varied and singularly accurate intelligence, and there were constant surprises that Mr. Phelps should have known so much that would seem to be so remote from his life and studies.

Indianapolis Journal.

As a lawyer, Congressman, statesman, and diplomat, he made for himself a prominent place in American history.

Bloomington (Ill.) Paragraph.

His liberal education and manners, and his thorough knowledge of foreign affairs, made him one of the most capable ambassadors that ever represented our country at a foreign court.

Toledo (Ohio) Blade.

His life was one of useful public service.

Louisville Journal.

Mr. Phelps belonged rather to the early days of the Republic than to this present era of half-made public men. He was a scholar without affectation, and a publicist and economist of extraordinary equipment. There were men more noisily notable in public affairs than William Walter Phelps, none of more sterling worth, or of more commanding talents, or of purer life.

Mobile Register.

He was a rich man in whose hands riches became a blessing to others.

Danville (Ky.) Advocate.

His contributions to the literature of political economy, both on the floor of the House of Representatives and through the public press, always commanded attention, even from his political enemies.

Nashville American.

It may be truly said that honors were thrust upon him.

Charleston (S. C.) Courier.

A statesman in the true sense of the word.

Kansas City Star.

No accusation was ever made against him affecting his personal integrity. He served his country faithfully at home and abroad.

San Francisco Call.

He was an encyclopedia of information on all subjects. . . . The life of Mr. Phelps is the best answer to the assertion — which is often made in circles not well informed—that in this country politics is so dirty a trade that men of culture cannot engage in it.

San Francisco Chronicle.

The qualities of statesmanship so needed during a critical period in our history were possessed and exercised by him in a marked degree.

Oregonian (Portland, Ore.).

He was manly and strong and a true friend to humanity.

Seattle (Wash.) Post-Intelligencer.

He was an able lawyer, and his talents and learning made him the best Ambassador to Berlin we ever had.

Schenectady (N. Y.) Union.

The more he learned of foreign government, the greater he loved his country.

Auburn (N. Y.) Advertiser.

Mr. Phelps was a true-born American citizen. He always had the interests of his nation at heart. His death will be mourned by this nation and all other nations.

Elmira Advertiser.

Few men have attained more natural prominence in the public service.

Troy Times.

His death is a State and a national loss.

Albany Journal.

He represented the best type of American manhood.

Syracuse Standard.

He had, among others, that splendid trait, a gift for friendship.

Binghamton Republican.

We cannot have too many practical politicians of his type.

Poughkeepsie Star.

Would that New Jersey and the country at large had many more such men.

Albany Express.

There never was a fair fighter who failed to like William Walter Phelps better after crossing swords with him.

Syracuse Herald.

He did what so few men ever do—made the most of the capacities with which he was endowed and of the influences placed in his hand.

Utica Observer.

In everything he was an enthusiast. His Republicanism was intense. His friendships were the same. So was his patriotism. He loved his country devotedly.

Oswego Times.

He honored his country by his presence in her legislative halls, and by his services in her behalf in ministerial circles abroad, as he also honored friendship.

Troy Press.

His ties of friendship were always enduring.

Rochester Democrat and Chronicle.

He was one of the most useful public men of his time. A man of noble aims and sterling patriotism.

Springfield (Mass.) Republican.

The respect of men came to him justly and in ample measure.

Boston Advertiser.

A noble man. His memory will be an inspiration.

Portland (Me.) Advertiser.

A prominent and influential figure in the public affairs of America.

Boston Globe.

Mr. Phelps was a natural orator and never liked to make set speeches. Whenever he spoke in Congress it was upon important matters and he was always listened to with close attention.

Boston Herald.

Mr. Phelps belonged to that class of wealthy men in this country who go into politics with a lofty purpose before them.

London (England) Star.

The news of the death of Mr. Phelps has caused great regret in the diplomatic circles of London, where he is remembered as a courteous and able United States Ambassador to European courts.

Mr. Dingley, in the Lewiston (Me.) Journal.

The writer, who was in Berlin in the winter of 1889–90, bears witness to the influence there of Minister Phelps. It is probably not too much to say that, since Benjamin Franklin, this Government has been represented in Europe by no man so well adapted to represent a republic to a monarchy as William Walter Phelps.

Eugene Field.

He was always strong to sustain the weak. Struggling men received from him a helping hand, but his charities were never on parade.

Carl Schurz.

I never could think of him without the greatest esteem for his brilliant gifts and the high qualities of his character, and without a deep affection for the loveliness of his nature.

Charles Emory Smith.

His talent for public life was of a rare and high order. He had elements of real greatness. When he entered Congress, he at once took high rank as a parliamentary orator. His style was lucid, epigrammatic, and incisive. He was sure in his grasp of principles, and his perceptions were as quick as a woman's intuitions. Had he remained a longer period in the House or gone to the Senate, he would have had an enduring place as one of the foremost parliamentary speakers of our days. His diplomatic life was no less successful. He was eminently fitted for that atmosphere.

Whitelaw Reid.

No man had more, or more widely cultured, or warmer friends; and the whole country, in all sections, and in all parties, will regret the loss of a public servant of distinguished ability, of the most transparent and courageous integrity, and the most high-minded and generous public spirit.

Murat Halstead.

Mr. Phelps has been before the country for more than twenty years as a man of national reputation. The country will honor him with long remembrance, enduring affection, and sincere regrets. But one had to know him well to estimate truly the generosity of his nature, the geniality of his temper, the manliness of his intellect, and the chivalry that was an inspiration in his brave and beautiful life.

SPEECHES AND ADDRESSES

SOUND CURRENCY

Speech of Mr. Phelps, of New Jersey, in the House of Representatives, April 1, 1874

[The House having under consideration the bill (H. R. No. 1572) entitled "An act to amend the several acts providing a national currency and to establish free banking and for other purposes."]

Mr. Phelps said:

Mr. Speaker, we are bound to give the people of these United States a sound currency. We are bound to give them specie payments; for only gold, or a credit based on gold, is a sound currency. We are bound, whether we be Liberals, Republicans, or Democrats, by express promise; we are bound by the provisions of a law, the first ever signed by our Chief Magistrate; we are bound by the oath we took as members of this House to support the Constitution; we are bound by the conventions of Philadelphia, Cincinnati, and Baltimore, which pledged the three great parties to "speedy resumption"; we are bound by the Act of March, 1869, which "solemnly pledged the public faith to make provision at the earliest practicable period for the redemption of the United States notes in coin"; we are bound by the Constitution, which was formed "to promote the general welfare." Can we better provide for the general welfare than by giving to the people a uniform, stable currency?

For the general welfare, for the interests of other classes, others may speak. Let me to-day speak for the interests of labor—the labor of the farm and of the shop—

FOR THE POOR MAN

I believe, and I think I can show, that while the moral evils resulting from a depreciated currency fall uniformly, the

material ill, the real suffering and loss, fall upon the laborer and the farmer. The capitalist and merchant, in the resources of varied exchanges and varied investments, may adjust and shift the loss; the poor man receives it all. Wall Street, and Beacon Street, and Chestnut Street may escape; the farm and the workshop, never. Therefore I urge to-day the resumption of specie payments in the name of the farmer and mechanic.

I ask a sound currency for those whose ploughs rust in the furrow; for those who darken the streets of Paterson with their patient waitings.

I SPEAK FOR MY OWN PEOPLE

And let no man smile that I speak for those whose wants I best know and most feel: I speak *for* them, not *to* them. Shall I tell them of sufferings they have felt? Shall I point them to the silent forge, and spindle, and loom? They have lived and moved among them all this dreary winter, as men can live and move, even among the silent monuments of departed life. They ask for a sound currency; as their representative, I ask for it in their name. They have waited, they are still waiting, with patience. So far, they have asked for bread, and their Government has given them a stone; they have asked for money, their Government has given them a rag.

Mr. Speaker, I could spend much time in proving financial truths that were never disputed before this year of our Lord. Why should I? Shall I put up a man of straw, to knock him down? Shall I tell truths that the theory and experience of the world have established? Could I write them better than Smith, Ricardo, Say, Rice, and Bagehot? Can I speak them better than Jefferson, and Benton, and Webster, and Clay? If there is a man who believes there is any other basis for a sound currency than gold, and who maintains that belief in the face of the world's testimony and the world's experience, I cannot convert him; I will not attempt it.

It seems to me that most of the confusion of thought and expression that appears in this discussion is the result of inaccuracy of terms. The words are used inaccurately. The confusion is one, not in the subject, not in the mind that

grasps it, but in the terminology. Give that strict definition to terms, give that strict use of terms when defined, which rules in other sciences, and all confusion must give way to order and harmony. In the great process of exchange there are two parts, two functions. For these two functions two different instruments are needed. Let us give these different instruments different names, and carefully maintain the distinction. What is money? It is the measure of value. It is the instrument devised to transact the first step in an exchange. It is the commodity used to estimate the relative value of other commodities.

Before we can exchange commodities we must know what is their real value. We must take a commodity of fixed value, and, dividing it into units, make these represent the ratio which other commodities bear to each other. This measure of value is money.

THIS MEASURE OF VALUE IS GOLD

Why? Because gold has the mechanical qualities for such a measure. It is divisible and indestructible. It has, too, a universal and stable value. Now money must have value, because it is used to measure value. If we wished to measure the length of commodities, we would take a measure that had length. Did we wish to measure weight, we would take as a measure a commodity that had weight. So when we measure values we must have a measure that has value. And gold is the only article that has a universal and stable value. Universal, for here civilization and barbarism, the past and the present, meet. Abraham counted shekels in the first recorded bargain, and William exacted from France a coin subsidy. The Pacific islander clamors for gold; and for gold the poet laureate of Great Britain sells his muse. "But," says an objector, "have not other commodities a universal value? How with wheat? Abraham gathered wheat before shekels. Glidden's mummy unfolded wheat mixed with gold, and your islander sometimes says 'wheat' first, 'gold' afterward." All of which is true. But the demand for wheat is finite, and can be supplied. When supplied, the price falls, for there is a glut. Not so with gold. The demand is infinite; there can

be no glut. It grows on what it feeds. The Incas, when their eyes were dazzled with its ubiquitous sheen, schemed for it; and our richest grangers — most virtuous of men — are still Olivers, asking for more. And gold has a stable value; not perfectly so (for I have heard of California and Australia), but more stable than any other commodity. Hence for our money, for our measure of value, we take gold.

But besides money we hear of currency. What is that? Money was the measure of value.

WHAT IS CURRENCY?

Currency is the medium of exchange. It is the instrument that performs the second process in exchange. After money has fixed the relative values of commodities, currency makes the exchange. And what is currency? What does it consist of?

Mainly of credit,—credit in one of its many forms, draft and note, bill and check and account. So we have two different instruments, and two sets of names for them; one set is, the measure of value—gold, money; the other is, the medium of exchange—paper credit, currency.

And here is the only opportunity for mistake in keeping this distinction. Money is the measure of value—is gold. Currency is the medium of exchange—is paper representing gold. But as a principal can do what its representative can—money, gold, can also discharge the second process of exchange, can also be currency. It can perform the two functions. But when money performs the second function, makes the exchange, it is currency. Hence a deal of confusion. From this we escape by bearing always in mind that, while money is currency, currency, except the small part which is gold, is not money. And perhaps just here it is well to say that no bullionist, no hard-money man, as far as I know, wants to use gold for currency. We want to use gold for money, for the measure of values. We want to use paper as currency, as the medium of exchange. In other words, we think gold the best measure of value; paper the best instrument of exchange, the best currency. But it must be paper that represents value,

that represents gold, and can be turned into it. Why, then, are we dissatisfied with our present currency, which is paper? For the reason that it is not real currency, it does not represent value. It was not born, it was made.

WHAT IS THE ORIGIN OF A SOUND CURRENCY?

How does it get its birth? It is born in some transaction, and represents some value, money or property, which the transaction concerned. This is truest of the lowest and highest forms of credit. Take the earliest conception of currency. It is in the very infancy of trade before money is yet used as a measure of value. My friend has a skiff on the Hudson; I have a skiff on the Potomac. We wish to exchange. My friend takes my skiff. He gives me a writing which empowers the bearer to take his. This writing is

A DRAFT,

the simplest form of credit, the first piece of currency. And in the market any man who wants the skiff, or knows the value of it, will accept it as currency. This draft was born in a transaction—the exchange of skiffs; and represents value—property, the Hudson skiff, which exists to redeem it.

Take a step further in the development of currency. Money is now used as a measure of value, and exchanges are to that degree simplified. My friend this time wishes to buy my house. We fix the price. He has no money, but I trust him. He gives me a written promise to pay. Here is another form of credit. I walk off with another kind of currency—

THE PROMISSORY NOTE

This note, too, was born in a transaction—the purchase and sale of the house. And the note, too, represents property, value; for it represents the house which my friend owns, and which still exists as a means of payment. If my friend, when the note falls due, has the house, he can, by sale or mortgage, pay it. But suppose my friend has sold the house before the note falls due. If he sold it, he sold it for something—money

or currency or property,—and he holds the money or draft or property in place of the house and the representative of his note, and ready for its redemption. Just as the skiff stood behind the draft, the house stands behind the note.

But before my friend's note fell due, I needed a still higher kind of currency, one capable of wider circulation. Strangers refuse it; so I go to my bank. The bank will discount if I will take the bank's promise. The bank's promise passes as money; so I take it. This time I go out with another form of credit—another kind of currency—

THE BANK-NOTE

This bank-bill came into being in a transaction, and represents value—the house of my friend, which still stands ready to furnish the money to pay the note, which pays the bank-bill.

So under natural laws currency in all forms comes into the volume of circulation, as the result of transactions, as the representative of value. Its volume, therefore, regulates itself. There is as much as there are transactions, as there are values, and no more

But there comes a

DISTURBING ELEMENT

The Government injects it into this natural stream fed by the business of the country. Government issues its promises, not as the representative of gold, not as the representative of property, but as the representative of debt. Natural currency comes as the representative of wealth—the Government currency as the representative of poverty.

Why, then, do not the laws of trade eject it, this foreign element—this bastard currency? They would. Men would refuse to take it. Nature would cure herself. But supreme sovereignty interferes and forces it upon the people. The people submit because they are law-abiding.

"But," says the friend of the greenback, "you argue as if the Government gave away its currency. This is not true. The Government received value for it." Certainly; the Government received property for its notes; but the property

was bought for consumption or destruction. The property immediately upon its transfer ceased to exist as the means for paying the notes. If I sold a citizen a cargo of grain and he gave me his note for it, the cargo of grain in his hands, or some one else's, exists as the means of paying it. If I sell the cargo to the Government and take its note, the Government takes the grain and distributes the grain amongst its soldiers, and it is consumed, and no grain is left to pay the notes, nor can it be sold to furnish other means of paying them. In the case of the Government note the property perished, leaving the note unprotected. In the case of the private note the property remained to produce the means for payment. This examination of the nature of credit, of the origin of currency,

SHOWS ITS PROPER LIMITS

Credit can act beneficently till it reaches the consumer; there it should stop. Bankers and merchants are simply agents for the exchange of commodities, and as such they may safely promise to pay with merchandise in existence, not for their own consumption, but for sale; and thus they may conduct their operations forever without failure, through the various degrees of subdivision until the actual consumer is reached through the retail dealer. Here the point is reached where credit is most pernicious and should be avoided. The promises issued by the consumer, whether it be the Government or the laborer, are not from their nature currency, and any effort to force their circulation produces only confusion and loss. But this is what our Government did when, in the stress of war, it issued its promises against property, which it consumed or destroyed. Hence came the greenback, fruitful source of all our woes. This increased the currency beyond its natural limits. It was in excess. There was more currency than there was property for it to represent, and

THERE WAS A DEPRECIATION

Let me not waste time to chronicle the now familiar effects of a depreciated and irredeemable currency. It is always in excess. This excess stimulates extravagance and speculation.

There is constant temptation to be rid of a currency whose value is uncertain. Use it now, it is worth something; retain it until to-morrow, it may be worth nothing. And so the spirit of the gambler enters into the heart of the nation, and after extravagance come speculation, crime, moral and material ruin. To chronicle what of this moral and material ruin is general, I do not pause. I pass this to show that the worst evils of an unsound currency fall upon the poor.

The harm of wrong legislation in finance, as in taxation, falls and rests at last upon them. As a direct consequence of depreciated money, prices fluctuate, so the man who buys cannot tell for what he will sell, or what his money will be worth when he gets his pay. Against this uncertainty the rich man who sells can insure himself by adding a percentage to his price. The poor man who buys, buys to consume, not to sell again, and pays this percentage out of his poverty. The rich man adds to the price of his commodities the premium on gold at each rise, and by continual exchanges adjusts or shifts the loss. The poor man has but one thing to exchange —his labor,—and does not know the hourly, daily, or weekly rise of gold; and if he does, he cannot daily, hourly, weekly, or even monthly add it to his wages. He cannot readily make new contracts for his labor, and, unfortunately, it is the only contract he can ever make. So the premium on gold reaches his wages last of all.

Certainly, then, an

IRREDEEMABLE CURRENCY IS NOT FOR THE POOR MAN

If it is for the benefit of any, it is for the rich man and for the speculator. The more rich the man, the more desperate the speculator; the more easily he avoids the losses, the more certainly he profits by the fluctuations. Increase the number and variety of transactions, and you increase the opportunities to adjust or shift the burdens of a fluctuating currency. The poor man, who has nothing to sell but his labor, and who has everything to buy—lodging, food, clothing,—finds his labor receiving only the premium on gold. This is bad for him at one end, and it is equally bad at the other; for, for his support, he pays, in each case, something beyond the premium.

And this brings us to the general principle, that the premium on gold does not accurately measure the advance of prices, except in those articles that we export. In all other articles, prices rise beyond the gold premium, and this rise is due to the percentage added on each exchange, to insure the seller against subsequent depreciation of the money in which he shall be paid.

Naturally the increase in price will be least in those commodities which pass directly from producer to consumer, and greatest in those which are subjected to most frequent transfers. When Mr. Low buys his tea in China, he pays for it in gold. The Chinese as yet are not intelligent enough to accept "the best currency the world ever saw." When the tea is in his warehouse,—freight, duties, and exchange all paid,—he fixes the price. He adds to cost the usual percentage of profit and the premium on gold; but he does not stop here. He sells on time, and before the time expires gold may rise 2 or 3 per cent. He does not think it will rise so much; but it may, and, as he sees no propriety in running any risk, he adds 3 per cent. and the jobber gets Mr. Low's tea into Chicago at a cost of 3 per cent. above the premium on gold, and when my friend from Kansas stopped over last November and bought his family chests to send to Wyandotte, the Chicago merchant said: "This M. C. will not remit before the 5th of next month; by that time some more of the $44,000,000 will be out, and the premium on gold, instead of being 6, as it is now, may be 10 or 12; I will add 5 per cent. to guard against loss." So when this tea reaches the little grangers at Wyandotte, though gold is up only 10 per cent., tea is up 18 per cent.; 3 per cent. added by the New York importer, and 5 per cent. added by the Chicago jobber. So in any article, especially manufactured articles, where the materials have passed through many hands, we shall have the price naturally raised far above the gold premium.

And this is

WHY THE FARMER, THE WESTERN FARMER, SUFFERS

more from a depreciated currency than any one else, except the poor man who has only his own labor to sell. Why?

Because the western farmer gets for his produce only the price of the foreign market. They raise and sell cotton, pork, beef, corn, wheat, cheese. The price of these in New York is always the price in Liverpool, less the price of transportation. It must be so. If the price in Liverpool were more, we should export, or raise the home price. If the price in Liverpool were less, we should cease to carry produce there and the surplus accumulating in New York would force the New York price down to the Liverpool level. This is the theory, and this is the fact, that Liverpool fixes the price of our farm products. "But," say the friends of an irredeemable currency, "the farmer gets his price in gold and he gets the benefit of the premium; how, then, is he hurt?" He is hurt because the depreciation of our currency does not measure the increase in the prices of the commodities he buys. Say gold is 110; say 10 marks the depreciation of our dollar, and the farmer gets a gold dollar and changes it into $1.10, will his $1.10 buy what it once did? No; rent, clothing, food, tools, horses, tea, coffee, all have advanced beyond the gold premium, and we have seen the reason. Each dealer added a percentage to guard against the loss of an uncertain currency.

And what is the

RESULT TO THE FARMER?

He gets for his produce, in paper money, what he got before the war, plus the premium on gold; but everything he buys he buys at an advance greater than the premium. Wheat in Chicago before the war was $1.10 per bushel, good sugar 9 cents per pound. Now, in the same market, wheat brings $1.25 and the same sugar 11½ cents. The price of the wheat shows the premium of gold, the price of the sugar shows the premium of gold plus an advance of 12 per cent. The importer and jobber have not only charged the premium on gold to the consumer, they have also taken from him an extravagant rate for shielding them from further loss. So here the fluctuating currency was a source of wealth to the rich trader, a source of poverty to the farmer and consumer. All the manufacturers and merchants have made themselves their own insurers. They have charged the premiums, which they

themselves fixed, and the laborer and farmer have had to pay them.

It is not the worst of the farmer's case that his bushel of wheat shall not bring him as much sugar, as many books, as before. It costs him, alas! more to grow it. He pays more for land, for service, for tools, for horses—more than before.

And yet the perpetuation of a financial system which robs the laborer and the farmer to fill the coffers of the merchant and the speculator is a policy urged by those who pretend to be the enemies of the rich and the friends of the poor.

In the name, then, of the laborer who consumes, and the farmer who produces, whose welfare is the welfare of the country, and whose welfare is sapped by a dishonest currency, give us a currency which has gold for its basis. This much at least we can do. We cannot do all; we cannot cure

ALL THE EVILS OF THE FINANCIAL WORLD

Men will still fail; panics will still blast; Indianapolis will still want money; corn raised too far from market will still warm the disappointed husbandman; railroad robbers will again drive their four-in-hands; the wicked will flourish; the good will pine; Lazarus will lie outside; Dives will feast inside—in a word, man will still be human whatever currency triumphs. But with a redeemable currency we can make fewer the failures, fewer the panics, fewer the Lazaruses, fewer the Diveses, less the suffering, less the vice. Yes, I admit with it—even with an honest currency—

WE SHALL STILL HAVE PANICS

A world which does its business on a credit basis cannot escape them; and this basis is one which grows wider as the world grows older.

The demands on credit must increase; for the world does not contain money enough to effect its business, and credit in one of its multiform shapes must continue to be the principal instrument of exchange. Only in rude barbarism does money discharge all the functions of exchange; and as civilization

increases the business of the world, credit by bill, by note, by check, by book account, is forced into greater exercise.

How large a part credit plays in the business of our own country let the accomplished gentleman from Ohio tell, who long ago, by careful investigation, obtained and recorded the figures. From him we learn that that part of the currency, which is money, really so or legalized—in other words, the legal-tender of a nation,—bears an insignificant ratio in the grand total of exchanges. He found that the history of the

CLEARING-HOUSE ASSOCIATION

of the New York banks showed that an average of 4 per cent. in legal money was employed. In an existence of seventeen years, the association had made exchanges amounting to $273,661,000,000, and used $11,207,000,000.

IN THE REDEMPTION BANKS

he found the percentage 12.1 per cent. In six business days these banks effected exchanges of $154,959,665, and used $18,770,708.

IN CERTAIN COUNTRY BANKS

fairly selected from different States and Territories as having transactions nearest to the farming population, where credit is less generally used, he found the percentage 28 of money to 100 of receipts. The receipts for six days were $2,102,488, the legal money $599,328.

This was the humble part played by legal money in our own bank exchanges. What the exact percentage is in the sections without banking facilities it would be difficult to say. There it varies and in different nations it varies; but it is always small. In London, Bagehot assumes the ratio of legal-tender to total circulation is 3 per cent. In New York, as a whole, it is properly assumed at 5 per cent. In other words, out of transactions involving $100,000,000, not more than $5,000,000 of coin, greenbacks, and bank-notes are used. At least ninety-five out of every one hundred millions is paid by checks, drafts,

bills, and the like. And small as this ratio is, as a more advanced civilization forces new inventions to add to the many forms credit can assume, the future will probably see that that part of the currency which is money, will, as the years go by, bear a smaller and smaller ratio to the whole amount of commercial transactions.

Try to realize this—the extent to which our people carry on their transactions on mere promises to pay, their commerce, their manufactures, their trade, all their industries, with money to pay for only fifteen one-hundredths of their business. And yet this vast system of credit stands the strain, this complicate industry goes on for years, until its delicate support is broken. That support is trust: the trust my friend has that his bank will pay his check; the trust I have that my friends debited in my ledger for money loaned will pay when I ask them. This enables the bank-check and the book credit, or any currency, to take the place of money.

When this support is broken, when citizens begin to doubt the solvency of banks and bankers, and neighbors the solvency of each other,

THEN COMES A PANIC—

the child of distrust—and all, refusing every form of credit, note, or draft, or bill, or check, demand money. Currency is valueless; the delicate machinery of credit which the ages have perfected ceases to work, and man, in the frenzy of distrust, remitted to his original barbarism, will take only gold. Until the panic is hopeless, if law interferes, they will obey it, and take the legal money, which the law enforces. If the panic is hopeless, the creditor, doubting the ultimate solvency even of the Government, refuses its legal-tender, and peace comes only in the utter ruin of bankruptcy. The trouble is the people have asked fifteen millions of legalized money to do the work of one hundred millions, and it cannot.

This shows the cause of panics—the possibility in the human heart suddenly to lose its normal trust in its kind. And the human heart is the same and will act to the same causes, whether the legal money is gold or whether it is paper. We shall be liable to panics always; for we can never make the

exchanges of our present civilization for money, but must always use credit mainly. And when we use credit, and the human heart remains as it is, we are always subject to the incursion of that distrust which will suddenly palsy the activity of currency, and panic will reign. All we claim is that the liability to this incursion of distrust, this panic, is naturally greater under an irredeemable currency. The evils of an irredeemable currency, to which I have already alluded, tend strongly to produce it, tend strongly to aggravate and perpetuate it when produced. The reign of paper money gives us speculation and extravagance. Both use up money rapidly, extravagance consumes, speculation wastes it, or buries it in unprofitable investment. This twofold drain is felt, and a people whose *morale* has been sapped by an artificial prosperity are forced to look about them. They recognize and exaggerate consequences which they have no courage to endure; and in speedy loss of hope and faith they rush to save all that to them has worth—money. And the loss of trust, which leads men temporarily to despise credit and seek only gold, is panic. Paper money has produced it; paper money will aggravate it. Had we a redeemable currency, a currency that the solvent world has, the insane want of money would be met. The gold of a thrifty population, ever looking for the most profitable market, would come to our relief. The profits offered would overcome all obstacles and drain the world, were it necessary. But it is not. It is an unreasoning panic. The arrival of a little gold, the news of it on a westering ship, breaks the spell,

AND CONFIDENCE REIGNS AGAIN

Where we have a national currency of our own—the best in the world — there is no such remedy, no such cure. The national issue, if it has any value, has a limit. The people know that limit, know that the limit fixed for a normal condition of the market is inadequate now. And if it has no limit, the most ignorant know it is worthless, its legality fails to give it currency, and the national issue disappears with the Continental scrip, the French *assignat*, the Texas red-back, the South American shin-plaster.

Specie payments will not prevent panics, but they will retard and cure them.

And here, too, is the folly of an argument based on a supposition that governments can tell how much legal money is needed for a nation's wants. The *per capita* theory is a vain one; for the amount shifts from day to day, from market to market. In normal condition, New York needs five millions of legal money to do the work of one hundred millions; in times of panic, New York needs one hundred millions of legal money to do the work of one hundred millions. What amount shall the anxious legislator manufacture for New York's wants? Shall he make it one hundred millions? Then it will take two dollars to buy a ten-penny loaf when there is no panic. Shall he make it five millions? If the panic continues he can buy his ten-penny loaf for half a cent. I would counsel the anxious legislator under these circumstances to hold off, and let God and nature take care of man's wants.

Without further discussion let us assume:

1. That gold is the only basis of a sound currency.

2. That paper redeemable in gold is the best currency.

3. That currency must always perform the larger part of the world's exchanges.

4. That currency is that form of credit which gets its birth in business transactions, and represents an existing value—either gold or property.

5. That currency, untrammelled by governmental interference, regulates its own volume.

6. That governmental credit, not representing gold in the Treasury, not issued against property in existence, but against property consumed or destroyed, is a bastard currency; and, as a foreign and superfluous element, depreciates the currency of the people.

7. That a depreciated currency inflicts moral ill upon all classes, but throws the material loss and suffering mainly on the farmer and laborer.

8. That a depreciated currency tends to create and aggravate panics.

9. That it is our duty to legislate in the direction of specie payments.

Now we come to the

BILL OF THE COMMITTEE

I break no confidence in saying it is the bill of no member—it is literally the bill of the committee—the result of conflicting views. A part of its provisions I like, a part I do not. But I am willing, as a whole, to take it. I believe there is more good in it than harm. It points and moves in the direction of specie payment. That is something. It tells the people we mean to be honest, when we can afford it; that we will make no more forced loans—issue no more greenbacks; but will by degrees redeem them all. Perhaps, after all, it is not safe to go faster.

But with so strong a motive I would dare the risk of proclaiming resumption as the chief glory of our Centennial; relying upon our ability to borrow sufficient gold by the sale of our bonds. It would be the brightest star in Philadelphia's galaxy. I believe that gold enough, without panic, could be obtained in the European market to answer the demands of a graduated resumption, which should be complete on the Fourth of July 1876. The sufferings, in my opinion, occasioned by such resumption would be slight compared with those following a depreciated currency.

But in this opinion a majority of my colleagues of the committee do not share, and the result is the

COMPROMISE OF THE EIGHTH SECTION

which provides for the gradual reduction of the amount of legal-tender. That method was selected as the one involving the least distress. The contraction is gradual and slow. At the beginning the currency is not contracted at all. The quantity of national notes is not changed. A portion of them are changed in quality, are of a higher value; but this value is not for some time appreciable, and to the end they can be used as legal-tender. For the two millions each month withdrawn, two millions are immediately substituted. These two millions discharge all the functions of the original greenback,

although they have the further merit of carrying the promise of repayment in gold at a definite time.

We have, therefore, until two years have elapsed, still four hundred millions of promises out; but of these promises two millions monthly are assuming a definite and respectable character. For two years, then, there can be no contraction of the volume. But will not the gold greenback be hoarded? Yes, by the banks, who, being forced to keep a reserve in greenbacks, will release their paper greenbacks, and use these instead. The banks need one hundred and forty millions for their reserve, so that the banks will furnish a depository for more than the fifty millions which can be issued for two years. After two years there will be contraction by the amount of two millions for each month. In the meantime, should private citizens compete with the banks for the gold greenback, which is scarcely probable until the reserve of the banks is supplied, the gold greenbacks in private hands furnish a slight elasticity to the currency which may have its use.

THE GOLD GREENBACK

at the issue is worth scarcely more than the paper greenback; but as it approaches the time of payment increases rapidly in value, so that the tendency constantly increases to withdraw it from circulation. But, as it is still money, a great demand for money increasing its rate would force it into market again.

Let us not forget, in examining this method, that the action taken is final and cannot, by indirection, be repealed by the Government. The dishonored and indefinite promises that have been withdrawn are cancelled, never to be reissued. In their place are promises so explicit and definite that no Congress would dare to break them. Two millions of irredeemable paper is destroyed each month, and cannot, except by direct act of sovereignty, be re-created.

It should not be unnoticed in considering the value of this measure that

IT IS A SIMPLE MEASURE

free from subtlety and complication; one within the comprehension of the plain citizen. This is as it should be. If

Government will meddle with that which it should leave alone, at least let this interference be such as the people can understand and intelligently conform to.

This is an easy measure, and alas! a slow measure of resumption.

If we offered no quicker results we were bound to make provisions which should guard the long interim as far as possible from the evils of our depreciated currency. It was not, therefore, sufficient for this committee to offer only a method of resumption which in many years would bring this country to specie payments. It was necessary that they should also provide what safeguards could be devised against the recurrence of panics in the meantime.

We have seen that the natural tendency of a depreciated currency is to lead indirectly to the destruction of that trust which is the foundation of all currency. We have seen that this destruction of trust is the occasion of panic. In the absence of trust, in the temporary destruction of currency, only money is prized. In countries where the currency is normal, the duration of panics is stopped, by attracting to the points of stringency, by the offer of large interest, the money of the world. Here is an analogy which should guide us in the organization and management of the artificial currency which we have created.

When, under our system, this lack of trust destroys the functions of currency, and a frightened people refuse to accept aught else than the substitute the law forces upon them, if the amount of money is limited, from what source can the panic get its relief? It cannot fall back upon the markets of the world. The world, unfortunately, has not its best currency.

What is wanted, is that elasticity which the laws of trade supply in those countries which enjoy the currency of the world. In what way can an artificial elasticity be established which shall measurably supply this want? There seems to be no other than

THAT PLAN OF FREE BANKING

which the bill embodies. Government cannot supply it. How can the Government bank? On what? Could it issue, it

would be an unnatural currency. It would pass only under the compulsion of law. But the circulation of the bank would be regulated by demand, and would represent and be backed by the capital of the bank or other property. This is, of course, only true of a bank that expects to redeem.

Banking without such expectation would tempt the banks to use, in other forms, their capital and to preserve none of it in a shape ready for the redemption of its notes. Having put out their notes, without fear of redemption, the capital which represented these notes, and the property in exchange for which they issued them, would be by them placed in permanent investments, out of their reach for purposes of redemption, practically destroyed. Then the bank-note would cease to be legitimate currency. Like the Government note, it becomes the representative of poverty, not of wealth—of that consumed, not that existing—and would be only an additional, foreign, and dangerous element in the circulation.

But if the

BANKS ARE FORCED TO REDEEM

they are forced to maintain within their control the values which their notes represented, and their notes, therefore, remain a sound and healthy currency. The health of free banking depends entirely upon redemption. Were the banks required to redeem in gold, there could be no doubt of the wisdom of removing any restrictions upon the volume of their issue; but in our case Government has interfered with the laws of trade and redemption may be made in legalized rather than real money.

Under these conditions redemption is an experiment. Whether the legal tender, itself a piece of paper, can be made so superior to the bank-note that the holder of the bank-note will prefer to exchange it for the legal tender, is yet a problem to be solved. To insure the success of the experiment, all artificial means of increasing the value of the legal tender should be adopted. The bill of the committee finds the legal tender now superior to the bank-note, mainly in the fact that the legal tender is the bank's reserve. This insures the co-operation of the banks. They will force redemption as far as

their influence reaches. Is their influence sufficient to regulate the whole issue? I am of opinion that it is; that whether the citizen prefers the national note to the bank-note or not, if the banks do, a safe and practical redemption is secured. The danger of a fixed volume of such currency as passes for money, in view of the probability of panics, is such that the prudent mind may well choose the risk of practical redemption. There is danger of less suffering from an excessive issue of bank-notes which are not sent home for redemption, than there is from the devastations of a panic, which would be aggravated by a limited issue. Even without the restraints of redemption there is little danger of an excessive issue. The profits of the banking system are no longer great. The purchase of the bonds requires much money. The $56,000,000 issued in 1870 has but just been distributed. Under these circumstances the risk cannot be great.

We could afford to run a greate rrisk simply to check that cry of "monopoly," which will be urged loudly and with reason as long as a restriction which has let in certain citizens excludes others from the profits of the banking business.

NOTICE THE LAST PROVISION

It practically directs that we shall not use our gold to buy bonds; that we will pay, or save our gold to pay, obligations that are due, before we anticipate the payment of obligations not due. This is simple business thrift and honesty. Our gold can still be used for the expenses of Government when needed. With this drain upon the Treasury and the diminished income of the Government, gentlemen who deal in gold need have no fear that the accumulations will be much beyond the necessities of the monthly payments. I fear they may fall short. In that case the deficiency must be met by a sale of bonds or increased taxation. Against such deficiency the Ways and Means Committee of another Congress may need to report. But the sale of a few bonds, or a tax upon tea and coffee, is better than forever to continue the disgrace of an irredeemable currency.

Another objection is, the gold greenback makes another kind of currency. That is an objection; but both kinds perform

the same functions, and, if in circulation, must pass at the same value.

THE LAST OBJECTION

is,—gradual as the process is, it is a process ultimately of contraction, and must entail some suffering. This is true. It is idle to disguise it. We can regain specie payments only at a cost. But it is worth the cost. The people are ready to bear the pain; they clamor for the knife that shall save them. Shall we lack the courage to apply it to a willing patient? It needs only the determination, the start. Begin to rid us of a depreciated currency that stops our trade, saps our morals, and makes the rich richer, the poor poorer. Begin to give us a sound currency, the dollar of the fathers, the dollars of the world. We freed the slave; we saved the Union; we will pay our debts.

Mr. Farwell.—I desire to ask my friend from New Jersey a question. He announces that he speaks in behalf of the poor laborer of his State and of other States, who, he says, has suffered and is suffering on account of this depreciated currency. The question I desire to ask him is this: Whether the advanced price of labor is not four times greater than the present premium on gold?

Mr. Phelps.—My answer to that would be, first, to deny the premises. I do not think "the price of labor is four times greater than the present premium on gold." If my friend is correct in supposing that labor has increased fourfold beyond the premium on gold, I make this reply: Much more certainly than he can show the price of labor has increased four times beyond the premium of gold, I can show the price of living has increased six times. Grant that the laborer gets 40 per cent. more than he once did, it costs him 60 per cent. more to live than then. And my answer to him now, which has been categorical, does not include the moral influences of a depreciated currency, which ultimately stops manufactures, ultimately stops trade, and so tends to deprive the laborer of all wages.

What is the result? A depreciated currency slowly raises the wages of the laborer; but at last the bubble bursts.

Laborers instead of obtaining advanced wages cannot obtain wages at all. And if the gentleman wants to know whether the laborer with our depreciated currency gets an increase of wages four times greater than the premium on gold, let him go to Paterson and ask those five thousand mechanics who do not get any wages at all.

AGAINST THE FRANKING PRIVILEGE

Speeches in the House of Representatives, February 24 and 25, 1874

Mr. Phelps said:

Mr. Speaker, I shall oppose the bill introduced by the committee. I shall oppose the amendment suggested in his speech by the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. Tyner]; I shall oppose the substitute which will be offered at the proper time by my friend from Iowa [Mr. Kasson]. In a word, I shall oppose, with all due respect to those who differ from me in opinion, every bill, every amendment, every substitute, which proposes in whole or in part, directly or indirectly, to re-enact the franking privilege. I believe that a privilege for the few is an injustice to the many, and I for one shall try to give privileges to none, equal rights to all.

My opposition to this bill in the first instance, Mr. Speaker, is on the ground of that economy which we praise so much, which we practise so little. And if it is not presumptuous to criticise, let me say that in my opinion the record of this House in that regard has been singularly illogical and unsatisfactory; and when I remember that we are what my friend from Massachusetts [Mr. G. F. Hoar] so appropriately called us a few days ago in a moment of great excitement; when I remember that in his words we are a "body of intelligent statesmen," I submit, Mr. Speaker, our record is puzzling and unsatisfactory.

What is that record? We came here fresh from the people, eager to win reputation for ourselves, and to save the Commonwealth. What did we do? We began to speak; you spoke, Mr. Speaker; I spoke; and every man who got the floor spoke — for what? To demonstrate to the people our

willingness to sacrifice even our own salaries. We wasted ten days in talk, and when an end came, when we were all tired, when we were all hungry, when we were all sleepy, my indefatigable friend from Maine [Mr. Hale] insisted we should stay here late into the evening that he might read us a lecture on the selfish extravagance which would cut down our salaries to only $6000 instead of $5500,—a sum which he had recommended and more than once urged us to adopt. And the father of the House [Mr. Dawes], rising to the height of the great subject, in a voice whose sepulchral warning yet lingers in my ear, assured us again and again that he could bide his time—he could bide his time.

I went home that night distressed that I could not look upon this matter of $500 as one of such stupendous importance. But, sir, at the same time it entered my heart to think that under leaders so zealous the Republic could never take any detriment. But, mark you, the very next morning, or the next morning but one, my friend upon my right, the gentleman from Iowa [Mr. Donnan], the chairman of the Committee on Printing, modestly stepped to the front, and in this same House and before the same earnest economists proposed a bill—for what? To print for gratuitous distribution two hundred and fifty thousand copies of the Agricultural Report; not two hundred and fifty; not twenty-five hundred; not twenty-five thousand; but two hundred and fifty thousand copies, of the Agricultural Report. How I admired the audacity of my friend from Iowa! How I pitied his fate! If there had been such protests and speeches for a poor $500, what would be the fate of a man who dared to come before this House and propose that we should throw $500,000 into the rag-bags and barber-shops of the nation?

Mr. Speaker, my indefatigable friend from Maine never once took the floor upon that question; the father of the House refused utterly to prophesy, and the bill of my friend from Iowa went through almost without objection, certainly without discussion. And then day after day followed, and bill after bill was introduced, and the session began to grow old. Was there a man of us who got the floor who did not cry out for economy? Was there a man of us able to find

that *particular measure* on which he was willing to practise it?

By and by there came an occasion, and the brave and eloquent gentleman before me [Mr. Woodford] seized it. He offered the House an opportunity to reform and improve its record. He rose up very boldly—very unfortunately as the issue showed—and clearly placed the issue before the House. Does the House wish to discuss the finances of the nation, or does it wish to discuss its garden-seeds? And after full consideration the House, by one of the most unanimous votes I have witnessed this session, declared that as for them they would provide first for the distribution of garden-seeds, and after that for the distribution of the currency. When I sought the explanation of this seemingly inexplicable decision, what was it? The reply which I never hear upon this floor, but which I hear in my seat or whispered in the lobby, "It was the grangers"; that the grangers had called the attention of their Representatives to the fact that spring had come and the earth was waiting for its seeds, and there could be no further delay.

And so we get a bill before us which I say, in perfect sincerity, revives the franking privilege. I say it explicitly and boldly, this bill of the committee gives the member every right he had before except one. We cannot write our autograph letters and frank them. Wonderful restriction! We may frank documents that weigh one hundred pounds; we cannot frank a half-ounce letter. The gentlemen of the committee take from us the only privilege that is desirable and not subject to abuse. Who will write letters enough to burden the mails? Does the committee know how hard it is for members to write? Does it know how hard it is for constituents to read? The abuse lies elsewhere.

What was the abuse of the franking privilege which was complained of? Was it not the free transmission of heavy material, masses of binding and printing which we crammed into the mails of the country, to the damage and delay of the business and social correspondence of the people? And it is this heavy material that the bill proposes to frank—public documents, books, periodicals, seeds, roots, plants, scions,

everything else that is worthless and heavy. The committee in preparing this bill have revived the old abuse. They have taken the poor old castaway of the Forty-second Congress; they have given him a silk hat, and have dyed his mustache. But he is the same old original Jacobs still.

Why not be fair; why not be frank; and come out and say: "Behold the old bill; we have rebaptized it; but only—

> Keep the word of promise to our ear,
> And break it to our hope"?

I think it was my friend from Missouri [Mr. Buckner] who said that the abuse of the franking privilege was that members of this House and members of the Senate used it dishonestly. Mr. Speaker, judging others by myself, no one can think more poorly of this House than I, and yet I am perfectly convinced that neither in this House nor in the other are there to be found men who would dishonestly use a privilege like this. The statement is false on the face of it. Am I to believe with my friend from Missouri [Mr. Buckner] that any of these members now gathering round me—members who represent intelligent constituencies — any in this "collection of intelligent statesmen" would use his frank to send his dirty linen home to the wash? Sir, the idea is preposterous. A member who would use his frank to send his soiled linen to his washerwoman would never have any. And if there is any one who supposes that any Senator at the other end of the Capitol is about to frank home his furniture, when the people have no longer need of his services here, he must suppose that Senator a blockhead. No; the only abuse of the franking privilege is that which we propose to revive; that is, to load the mail with a mass of heavy material which does not pay its way.

What is urged in favor of this proposition? We are told that it is our bounden duty — my friend from Wisconsin [Mr. Hazleton] puts it the shortest—to provide the people with information. Now I will admit that my friend needs information; I think the people need information. But the people need other things — many more than we can supply. The people need warmth, cleanliness, virtue. But no one here

comes forward and proposes a free distribution of fires, of baths, or of Bibles.

The people need something else. And just here for once the sentiments of him who dwelleth in cities and him who dwelleth on the prairies, of him who lives in the East, and of him who lives in the West, of him who lives in the North, and of him who lives in the South, agree. Here is the one great want of the country. Why, Mr. Speaker [Mr. Monroe in the chair], did you ever meet one of your friends who was from the noble West who did not tell you that the noble West needed money? Did you ever meet any one from the sunny South who did not tell you that the sunny South needed money? And I am willing frankly to confess, in the presence of this "collection of intelligent statesmen," that my own State of New Jersey needs money. More; I have the best of evidence, to come nearer home, that in my own district there is scarcely a man, woman, or child who does not need money. And yet I do not propose, nor do you propose, neither does this committee propose, to distribute to your people or to my people the free bath, or the free fire, or the free Bible, or the free greenback.

Now, my friend from Illinois [Mr. Cannon] who addressed you three or four days ago, with an eloquence that was untutored but very effective, whose imagination flashed along the iron network of his logic in a way that fairly astonished the House, spoke of a great many things that filled me with wonder and amazement. He spoke of the hayseed in his hair, and under the magic touch of his voice that hayseed glowed around his head like the halo of the martyrs; and when he spoke of the oats in his throat, it was with such a force and such eloquence that I knew he felt them; and to all of this I had not the slightest objection. I listened and wondered; I gazed and admired until he came to praise his country folk at the expense of mine. This I would not stand. He represents a country constituency, just as I do. He has no large cities in his district, just as I have none. And he had no business to boast of the intelligence of his farmers on the prairies, just as if there were no intelligent farmers in New Jersey. How he boasted of their literary taste! And when he began to tell

us all that his farmers sent him letters to ask for books, I wanted then and there to rise up and say: "I represent farmers; they write to me for books; day after day I get similar letters from my constituents. They are wonderful letters, and sometimes the energy of their petition is such that it defies Noah Webster and Lindley Murray. They never fail to make the proviso that I should pay the postage."

Sir, I do not believe that among the letters from his prairie constituents, of which he speaks so bravely, he can find one that asks him for the history of the silurian period, or the crustacean formation, or the isothermal theory. It takes the Jersey farmer to ask for such! I appeal to the House, shall he boast over the intelligent requests of his farmers because they live on the prairies, and I be tongue-tied here and not suffered to speak of the intelligence of my farmers who live on the banks of the Passaic, the Hackensack, and the Hudson?

But, Mr. Speaker, I have concealed part of the truth. For every letter which I receive asking for the silurian period, or the crustacean formation, or the isothermal theory, I receive two letters which prefer a different request. For every letter asking for a public document, a Patent-Office Report, or even an Agricultural Report, I get a letter politely and kindly asking the loan of five dollars. Now, I ask if we are to furnish all our constituents with all they want—with their heat, with their information, with their cleanliness, with their virtue—must we not also furnish them with money? Yet I do not hear one single member, even if he represents a grange, who stands upon this floor to ask that, in addition to the Agricultural Report and the isothermal theory, we shall also by free distribution send five dollars to each of our constituents. And yet would not the five dollars help more than the Agricultural Report in our elections next fall?

But my friend from Illinois is confident that the people at large want these documents. Now, Mr. Speaker, far be it from me to run against the people. I have great respect for them in view of the fact that an election occurs so soon. But let us be sure first as to what the people want. My friend from Illinois himself aided to show that the people do not want the franking privilege and do not want the public documents

at the cost of taxation. He very properly ruled out from the discussion all the disreputable members of the community. He said, and said truly, that the railways do not want the crustacean formation or the isothermal theory or the Agricultural Report. I do not think they do; and I do not want to give it to them. I think the railways have no rights that we on this floor are bound to recognize except the right to be taxed and to carry the people for less than cost. If they wanted the public documents, we would not listen to their cry. Fortunate railways, that they do not! Neither, he says, do the express companies—another disreputable portion of society, useless and contemptible. They do not want public documents, and it is well they do not; for they could not have them. They have no rights which we are bound to respect except the right to suffer taxation and receive abuse.

And so he went through the list to banks and manufactories. But when he had covered the whole class of disreputable people who do not want the public documents, why did he stop? Ah, Mr. Speaker, there was an important omission in this catalogue which was supplied by my friend from Iowa [Mr. Kasson]. As I read the signs of the times, a majority of the people who dwell under the protection of these United States vote the Republican ticket. They voted it two years ago; they voted it last fall. Why did my friend from Illinois forget, until the gentleman from Iowa told him, that the Republican party do not want the franking privilege; that the last time they had an opportunity to speak they said in words as explicit as words could make the declaration, that they would abolish the franking privilege? My friend from Illinois had overlooked or forgotten the Republican party. Where then, in the name of common-sense, are the people who do want the franking privilege? When I pause for a reply I get it: "The grangers want it"; and inasmuch as the grangers, so far as I can judge, want everything, let us admit that they want these public documents. . . .

Mr. Speaker, I find that in discussing this franking privilege I have got into the printing-house; and that, as my friend from Wisconsin [Mr. Hazleton] said, is the real issue. This is our best argument. If you revive the franking privilege you

revive all the abuses of the public printing; and a blow aimed at the franking privilege is a blow aimed at the printing-house. May blows fall so many, so heavy, that this country may be saved the wasteful expenditure which proceeds from that source! Who would regret the fall of the Printing Bureau? Who really wants these public documents? Does it never occur to our friends that the inexorable laws of trade—those which even a paternal government cannot always successfully interfere with—show that the people do not want them? There is no town or village in this country where a traveller cannot go to any second-hand book-shop and buy any public document—whether it be the Agricultural Report, the Patent-Office Report, the crustacean formation, or the silurian period—by paying a little more than it is worth as old paper.

Evidently the demand is small, and we can easily answer it by providing a system by which reports, which contribute to the education of our people in political matters, may be brought more economically within their control; sending a few copies to the public libraries, or enabling all who wish to own them to purchase them at their real cost. If we are bound, notwithstanding what I think is forcibly urged, to furnish information, do not, for pity's sake, distribute Patent-Office Reports, nor give the people the Agricultural Reports. Certainly let us not send down to our districts any more treatises on the isothermal lines, or crustacean formations, or silurian periods, or salary grabs, or any one of these things. If we must tax the many to give books to the few, let us give them the spelling-book, the arithmetic, the reading-book—something that will really benefit them, which they will appreciate, which will make them better citizens, and more sure to vote the Republican ticket.

I said I opposed this measure in the interest of economy. I oppose it now in the interest of that universal justice which we all praise as we do economy, but which we refuse to practise just as we do economy. But my borrowed time allows only a question on this point. Is it fair to the people of these United States to tax them all, A, B, C, and D, all down to Z, in order that we may give a book to A? I claim this is not Republican doctrine. It is wrong; and we have no business to compel fifty people to pay taxes to give a luxury to one. . . .

The Speaker *pro tempore* (Mr. Monroe).—The time of the gentleman has expired.

Several Members.—Go on; go on.

The Speaker *pro tempore*.—If there be no objection the gentleman may proceed. The Chair hears none.

Mr. Phelps.—There is an amendment to this bill. "It was not always so." When this bill was first presented by the committee it was not there. The amendment is in italics, as much as to say, "Beware!" And I ask gentlemen to lend me their attention for a few moments while I state why the committee introduced the amendment, and urge all my Republican friends if they must pass this bill to see that they pass it with the amendment in. Briefly, when this bill was reported without the amendment, it came to the ear of a gentleman upon the committee that another Democratic friend of mine from New York was preparing a circular which he intended to send next fall, under the exercise of the franking privilege, to all Republican districts. He was enabled to obtain a copy of this circular; it was found to be short—in that respect, of course, unlike my friend—but, on the whole, witty, as my friend is always witty; but it was terribly damaging to the Republican party. . . .

Under these circumstances, I ask my Republican friends in this House—I have nothing to say to my friends on the other side—Ought we not, if we pass this bill, to see that there is in it this amendment? For the provision is carefully drawn that the Republican postmaster, if at any time, which would be about September, he thought the public welfare required it (and no doubt he would so think if a number of such circulars were deposited in the post-office), might, in that case, retain these circulars "in whole or in part for thirty days," or until the country was carried safely over the Pennsylvania election. I assure you he would retain them "in whole." The amendment is important. If we pass this bill, let us pass the amendment with it. It is our only safety.

And when we pass the amended bill, let us do it in a creditable manner. A bad deed derives some merit from a bold performance. Let us be bold in this. Let us own up that it is the original Jacobs. Let us take off the silk hat; let us

wash away the dye, and surrender all pretences. Let us so act that the people will not despise us, though they censure. If we attempt to deceive, we shall only win contempt. They are as intelligent as we are. We cannot deceive them. We shall fail in the attempt.

It is therefore better policy, as it is better manhood, if we purpose to re-enact the franking privilege, not to do it by this bill, but to do it boldly and openly. Take and adopt the amendment of the gentleman from New York [Mr. Mellish], and by it tell the people that we do re-enact the franking privilege. Do not let us ever again make the mistake of attempting to deceive them by a false issue.

[The next day Mr. Cobb, of Kansas, made a personal attack upon Mr. Phelps, charging that he had spoken disrespectfully of the House, and reproaching him for being rich, and also criticising him as a director in trust companies and other corporations, and a stockholder in railroads. To this demagogic tirade the member from New Jersey immediately replied as follows:]

I do not want to make any speech. I only want to say something. I confess to trouble in deciding in what manner I shall answer the indictment which has been so suddenly and unexpectedly entered. I had not the good fortune to be in the House at the opening of the gentleman's remarks; fortunately I heard the middle and the end. I hope I shall not dwell on the personalities in them further than to make one or two necessary corrections. He tried to thrust upon me some issues for which I am not responsible, and which lie between this House and myself. These I must correct.

It is not true that I spoke disrespectfully of this House. It is not true that I entertained any but the highest regards for its members. And it is wrong in my friend from Kansas to drag in a foreign issue.

Did I violate any proper rule of criticism in saying that in my opinion—an opinion which I share with many others—this House had not displayed during this session that practical interest in economy which the country expected, and which the

necessity of the Treasury required? It was proper criticism, and it is the truth.

But the gentleman has made personal charges to which I must plead guilty. He has found the facts and read them from the Congressional Directory. With the propriety of the method in which he conducted that portion of his argument I find no fault. If it suits him it suits me. As to the facts which he has exhibited to this House, they are correct. I have been unfortunate enough by hard work, industry, and a moderate amount of honesty, to have secured the positions he mentions. They involve a deal of labor, a deal of care, a deal of responsibility, and if any man envies me therefor I pity him. I will cheerfully yield the positions if he will assume the care. Yes, I am guilty.

But why did not the gentleman, when he was presenting this record to the House, say something like this: "It is a disgrace to this member of the House that he has secured these positions. It is a disgrace to this member that widows and orphans have been willing to trust him with their funds. It is a disgrace that in my State and other States he buried his money in railways which have made the country rich and which have left him poor. But it is proper for me to say that while he has done all these disgraceful acts, still, when the people of his district chose to send him here to represent them, he announced publicly his misfortune. It is a redeeming feature in his case that he said, in effect: 'Though I have done wrong, though I have accumulated wealth, though I have aided where I could the developing of distant parts of the country, yet still, knowing the disgrace of such conduct, and unwilling that any man here should suppose that my acts are influenced by interests which the House assumes but does not know, I will send to the *Congressional Record* an extract from the New Jersey Manual, which will give to all this damning record of my past.'" My friend from Kansas might at least have done me this justice.

Sir, if it be disgraceful to be a director of trust companies and of banks; if it be a disgrace to be a director of railroad and express companies; if it be wicked and contrary to the spirit of American institutions that I should endeavor by thrift

and honesty to accumulate that property for which others toil, yet I take this credit that I made a clean breast of it. Did I not, in anticipation of the polite curiosity that might introduce a resolution of inquiry, boldly and voluntarily go upon the record? . . .

Take the book; read the honorable gentleman's record. I admit, without one feeling of disappointment, that in that record I find nothing which is not creditable. I find nothing to censure, except that he endeavored to obtain at the universities that education which has enabled him to speak so forcibly here. Aside from that, nothing of which he need be ashamed. I find that instead of wasting his time in increasing the material interests of this country, instead of building railroads or establishing banks or doing anything of that disreputable, but humble and useful kind, wiser than I, he preferred, as a non-producer, continually to feed at different corners of the public crib.

THE SPEAKER *pro tempore*.—The time of the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. Phelps] has expired.

SEVERAL MEMBERS.—Let him go on.

THE SPEAKER *pro tempore*.—If there be no objection, the gentleman will proceed. The Chair hears none.

MR. PHELPS.—The gentleman's record, therefore, was different from mine. I earned my own support; he took his from the people. I labored in every way to accumulate that material wealth which is the secret of a new country's development and growth; he chose, as a politic way, to use in a proper way the wealth which others had acquired. Now, mark you, Mr. Speaker, I could run on some time in this strain; but that would be just as unfair to him as he was to me; for really it is no disgrace to me that, having a taste for material interests, I chose to labor for the development of the country; neither is it any disgrace to him that, having a taste and capacity for public life, he went into it, and from his majority held office. And, sir, had I been as successful as he has been, up to the present time, in receiving the honors of my party, I fear that like him I would never hesitate on any occasion, at any risk of good sense, of good breeding, of politeness—nothing should forbid me—to seize every opportunity, whether fair or unfair,

to speak as I thought would please my people, though to do it I had to twist the eternal rules of truth, and make the wrong appear the better reason.

Mr. Speaker, I regret I have occupied at all the time of this House. I did not wish to speak; but it seemed to me that, after an assault which was so directly personal, I should seize the opportunity of stating what I have endeavored to say in an inconsequential way.

It is true that I have wealth—I beg pardon, Mr. Speaker; that expression only shows that there is no proposition which a man can state absolutely. Before the panic it might have been well said that I could support myself and my family without the daily toil of the laborer, or the salary of the office-holder. But that panic, which was the result of paper money —I am glad to get in one good point in this wretched mess of personalities,—that panic, the result of an issue of irredeemable currency, did so injure me that I would be to-day willing to compare my possessions with those of my friend from Kansas; and upon such a comparison, he counting the money which he had got from the people, and I deducting the money which I had lost in Kansas railways, I am pretty sure he would find that, standing here to-day, he is a richer man than I. And the only bitterness I feel on this occasion is, that in these very railways in which I have made investments, and which pass mostly through the Western States, I have lost a great part of the fortune for the possession of which I am taunted.

My friend from Illinois, in his remarks, rather implied that I was a railway man, and therefore hostile to the prairies. Is it improper to say that through his own prairies, through his towns of Urbana and Champaign, there was a railroad built in which I was interested? It raised the value of those prairies at least one hundred per cent., and caused the growth of little cities all along its line. So his district gained by my railway; and as yet I have not got, and see no chance of getting back, my money. Yet these representatives of the "grangers," who have got our Eastern money and kept it, who have received from us these railways and given us nothing in return except a series of hopeless investments, stand up here in holy horror and declare that we shall not be allowed to speak on this mat-

ter, because we lost our money in the West. Under these circumstances, is it fair for my friend from Kansas to take Eastern money, use it in his railways, grow rich upon the proceeds of it, and then taunt us because we were foolish enough to go to Kansas and invest it?

If I am forced to speak of these railways, I think I may safely say that if my friend will look all through the disgraceful record of railways with which I am connected, there will not be found (unless I am deceived) one that ever received or ever asked aid from this Government, either in the way of money subsidy or land gratuity. I am a representative of New Jersey. I have acquired wealth, and spent it in Kansas, in Illinois, and in Texas, getting from it, in many cases, no return; getting from it in no case returns until long years have passed. Shall I for these reasons be prevented from speaking in this House what I may think with reference to the merits of the great questions which are brought before us? If my own modesty or the fear of the grangers should counsel silence, there is that in my representative position here which forbids me; and so long as the farmers of New Jersey send a man so stained with the achievements of honest industry to represent them on this floor, I shall, whether I am to be followed the next morning by my friend from Kansas or not, speak in the interests of the people as I understand those interests; speak for the welfare of the whole country as I understand its welfare; and no taunt of this kind from any source shall ever prevent me from meeting promptly every charge which may be hurled against me here or elsewhere.

IN BEHALF OF FITZ-JOHN PORTER

Speech in the House of Representatives, February 1, 1884

Bill for the relief of, and to restore to his former position in the army, Fitz-John Porter

Mr. Phelps said:

Mr. Chairman, speaking for the one most interested, I express his deep regret for the unkind allusions to the living and the dead which have been made in the heat of this discussion. In his long search for justice he has carefully avoided

any reflection upon those who have impeded him in the pursuit, and he refuses to accept any responsibility for these allusions, whether made by those who are friendly or those who are unfriendly to the bill. And may I not assume that if those who had made them had the floor they, too, would express their regret: the gentleman from New York [Mr. Slocum] who has charge of the bill, that he reflected upon the great war minister, whose great faults history will pardon for his greater achievements; the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. Steele], that, in his surprise at finding that a general on the board of examination viewed the evidence different from him, he intimated that he looked at the evidence with an eye upon the Presidency; the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. Cutcheon], that he checked the course of his strong argument to intimate that there was another general who wished to be reinstated; my colleague from New Jersey [Mr. McAdoo], a young Rupert in debate, that he suggested that a conviction of the military incompetency of still another general was a universal condition of sanity; my peaceful friend from Michigan [Mr. Horr], that he confessed that he could think just as General Grant did in everything, except in military matters; and my neighbor here from Ohio [Mr. Taylor]—but I cannot give the time to recall all the illustrious names that have been unnecessarily dragged into this debate.

Could they all be eliminated it were better; and this case could stand or fall on its own merits. It is my duty to speak to-day for Fitz-John Porter because he is my constituent. It is at the same time a pleasure and an honor because he is my friend, and I believe him to be an honest man and a loyal soldier.

"The mills of the gods grind slowly" in his case.

It was twenty years last week (Monday) since the last signature was put to the verdict of a military jury which drove him out of the army and made him a leper whom his Government should never touch with an office of trust or profit. This verdict awarded him such infamy that for a while Iscariot and Arnold were his only competitors. A blundering department furnished to an anxious President, a baffled army, and an indignant people this sacrifice; and fifteen millions straining unto

death to save their country in an hour of supreme despondency and gloom found a momentary relief in cursing the name of Porter.

Who was this sacrifice? One whose ancestry deserved well of the Republic; one, who as a boy of gentle heart and ways learned in the National Academy to hold a stain upon his honor as a wound, and to conceive all honor as sphered in loyalty to his country; one who as a youth stood the most chivalrous and accomplished officer in a guild whose military code gives to the testimony of a member under oath no greater force than his formal declaration; one who in manhood won wounds and glory in the field, and who on the 27th day of August, 1862, as said the gentleman from Michigan, "stood the consummate flower of the American army and its pride." This was the gentle, chivalrous, illustrious soldier who was thus lifted up into a storm of obloquy and reproach as a traitor to his country. What can he do? His fate is worse than Arnold's or Judas's. Arnold, hating his country, fled from it and received the rewards of treason; but Porter loves his country, and has no thought except of loyal service. Judas went out and died, conscience stricken; but Porter's conscience is clear, and remorse refuses to lead him to the field of blood. He does what an honest man ought, and only an honest man can do; he takes up his burden and bears it. He will live, and live down his wrongs. He will wait, and trust to God and his country for redress. He withdrew to the quiet of a New Jersey village and established his home. There he faithfully discharged all his duties, neither seeking nor shunning observation. He was a good husband, a good father, a good neighbor, citizen, and friend. That little village for twenty years has watched, honored, and loved the man. They have seen his eye grow sad and his hair grow white with hope deferred. But he never talked of his grievance nor asked for pity. He was fulfilling a sentence which, for such a man, Edward Everett truly said, was "in some respects worse than a sentence of death." This was his home life. His life abroad was a constant struggle to regain his good name. That was his mission, and he prosecuted it without pause or rest. On every proper occasion, in every proper place he

declared his innocence, offered his evidence, and asked for examination.

What was his crime? He did not obey an order of his superior to fight. And what was his defence? That the order came at night, and when it was too late to execute it. And second—for he was no coward, and only one man on this floor has been desperate enough to impute cowardice to him—and second, had the order come in time he would not have obeyed it, for its execution was the fruitless and assured destruction of his corps. I speak of one order. You say you have heard much of several orders. True, much in this House, but nothing in the report of the minority. The charges connected with the other orders brought into this discussion were so trivial and unimportant, and the answers to them were so complete and satisfactory, that the members of the committee to whom the opposition to this bill was intrusted, the prosecutors of this case, ignored them. Not so, however, the free-lances on the floor, who found in this ocean of facts about the sky above and the earth beneath and the atmosphere between so fruitful a head of eloquence that the galleries thought they heard the famous chorus of the opera, "Let us talk about the weather." Neither of these two orders was to fight. They were simply to march. Though not important enough to be mentioned in the minority report, as they have been the source of so much eloquence in the House, let me refer to them to escape confusion.

"[Order No. 1.]

"Headquarters Army of Virginia,
"Bristoe Station, August 27, 1862—6.30 P.M.

"General: The major-general commanding directs that you start at 1 o'clock, and come forward with your whole corps, or such part as is with you, so as to be here by daylight to-morrow morning. Hooker has had a severe action with the enemy, with a loss of about three hundred killed and wounded. The enemy has been driven back, but is retiring along the railroad. We must drive him from Manassas, and clear the country between that place and Gainesville, where McDowell

is. If Morell has not joined you, send word to him to push forward immediately; also send word to Banks to hurry forward with all speed to take your place at Warrenton Junction. It is necessary on all accounts that you should be here by daylight. I send an officer with this dispatch who will conduct you to this place. Be sure and send word to Banks, who is on the road to Fayetteville, probably in the direction of Bealeton. Say to Banks, also, that he had best run back the railroad trains to Cedar Run. If he is not with you, write him to that effect.

"P. S.—If Banks is not at Warrenton Junction, leave a regiment of infantry and two pieces of artillery as a guard till he comes up, with instructions to follow you immediately. If Banks is not at the junction, instruct Colonel Clary to run the trains back to this side of Cedar Run and post a regiment and section of artillery with it."

The first order was that General Porter should start at 1 o'clock on the morning of August 28, 1862, and march his force nine or ten miles to Bristoe Station, that it might there join at daybreak with the main army for the purpose of clearing the country between that place and Gainesville. General Porter, upon receiving it, summoned his generals and they looked at the state of affairs. The night was dark and misty; the road, surface and ditch, was blocked with wagons and cannons and their wrecks. It was doubtful if any effort made before the first glimmer of light would accomplish anything. It was certain that no effort could get the troops to Bristoe Station at daybreak, as was desired. These troops were fatigued and would need rest. They should be fresh for the all-day task of wandering in pursuit, which the order foreshadowed. The order showed, too, that the task to which they were summoned was not one of immediate importance. It was not a summons to a defence, or to an attack where great haste and exact punctuality was demanded. The order said that the enemy had already been driven back and was retiring. The task was to "clear the country" behind them. That task could begin as well any hour after daylight. These facts upon which that little council of war passed were not conjecture.

Before the order was received Porter had sent out two aids to view the road and report. This he did in anticipation of orders, and when he and his associates decided that it was not wise to make the start at 1 o'clock, he promptly sent a messenger to Pope and informed him of the decision and its reasons. He started at 3 o'clock with the first glimmer of light that made the start practicable, and there is no evidence that loss resulted to anybody from the delay. Pope admitted in his testimony (volume i., page 19) that it did no harm. The whole charge is so trivial that it was evidently brought as a make-weight, as something to buttress the main charge.

"[Order No. 2.]

"HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF VIRGINIA,
"CENTREVILLE, August 29, 1862.

"GENERALS MCDOWELL AND PORTER:

"You will please move forward with your joint commands toward Gainesville. I sent General Porter written orders to that effect an hour and a half ago. Heintzelman, Sigel, and Reno are moving on the Warrenton turnpike, and must now be not far from Gainesville. I desire that as soon as communication is established between this force and your own the whole command shall halt. It may be necessary to fall back behind Bull Run at Centreville to-night. I presume it will be so on account of our supplies. I have sent no orders of any description to Ricketts, and none to interfere in any way with the movements of McDowell's troops, except what I sent by his aid-de-camp last night, which were to hold his position on the Warrenton pike until the troops from here should fall upon the enemy's flank and rear. I do not even know Ricketts's position, as I have not been able to find out where General McDowell was until a late hour this morning. General McDowell will take immediate steps to communicate with General Ricketts, and instruct him to rejoin the other divisions of his corps as soon as practicable.

"If any considerable advantages are to be gained by departing from this order, it will not be strictly carried out. One thing must be had in view, that the troops must occupy a posi-

tion from which they can reach Bull Run to-night or by morning. The indications are that the whole force of the enemy is moving in this direction at a pace that will bring them here by to-morrow night or next day. My own headquarters will be, for the present, with Heintzelman's corps or at this place.

"JOHN POPE.
"Major-General Commanding."

The second order was addressed to McDowell and Porter. It is the joint order. It directed that their forces should move toward Gainesville. And what is the defence? First, Porter might have disobeyed without censure, for it was a discretionary order. The order says: "If any considerable advantages are to be gained by departing from this order, it will not be strictly carried out." The second defence is that it was carried out, for the order found Porter with McDowell, just where it ordered him to be. Says McDowell (volume i., page 349): "I commanded Porter's corps and my own division. We there on the ground received the joint order which directed the very thing we had done." And Pope knew that this joint order had been obeyed, for in his dispatch numbered 26 A (volume i., page 329) he says so. Why, then, did gentlemen discuss this joint order which was executed, as say both McDowell and Pope? There would seem to be no reason except for the temptation to warm our blood with the battle-cries of McDowell, "Fight? That is what we are here for," and "You go in there." These are good cries either for the House or for the field, but they were better had they been uttered by McDowell on the field as they were repeated by the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. Keifer] in the House, in a voice that could be distinctly heard; for General Porter never heard them; Lieutenant-Colonel Locke, chief of staff, never heard them; Captain Martin, of a Massachusetts battery; Captain Earle, Lieutenant Davis, and General Patrick never heard them; but, being all six by and present, did hear General McDowell say: "This is no place to fight a battle; you are too far off." And when General McDowell was recalled to explain the dilemma, that the three gallant officers did not hear, "That is what we are here for," and "Go in there," but, on the

contrary, "This is no place to fight a battle," what was McDowell's explanation? I repeat his very words:

"I can not recollect precisely what occurred or what conversation or what words passed between us at that time. I can not say what language I used or how it may have been understood whilst talking on that." (Pages 217 and 218.)

Why did not the gentleman from Ohio declaim what General McDowell was heard to say, and not what he wished he had said? The cry "This is no place to fight a battle" would not be so good for the House, but would have been a better order in the field; for it has never seemed to me a very creditable picture, even when painted by the gentleman from Ohio, to see McDowell take eighteen thousand men (ten thousand of Ricketts's, eight thousand of King's) from Porter, leave him with only nine thousand, and march away with his great force from the field, while he pointed to Porter in the opposite direction and said, "You go in there." It always seemed to me and to the world that McDowell, if either, should have gone in there himself.

"Headquarters in the Field,
"August 29, 1862—4.30 P.M.

"Major-General Porter:

"Your line of march brings you in on the enemy's right flank. I desire you to push forward into action at once on the enemy's flank, and, if possible, on his rear, keeping your right in communication with General Reynolds.

"The enemy is massed in the woods in front of us, but can be shelled out as soon as you engage their flank. Keep heavy reserves and use your batteries, keeping well closed to your right all the time. In case you are obliged to fall back, do so to your right and rear, so as to keep you in close communication with the right wing.

"John Pope,
"Major-General Commanding."

And now for the order of 4.30, an order which the minority report did discuss. Upon it stands or falls the guilt of Porter.

This order required Porter to fight. It instructed him to attack the enemy on his flank and, if possible, on his rear. He did not attack the enemy on his flank or on his rear. And what is his defence? First, he received the order after six o'clock at night, when it was too late. But, again, Porter, notwithstanding the cowardice with which the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. Keifer] taunted him, chooses to accept a braver defence, and admits that had the order come in time he would not have made the attack.

First, as to the time that this order was received. Before the court-martial there was no documentary evidence to fix it. There was much oral testimony, and some of it conflicted. The vast preponderance, however, seemed to establish the fact that Porter received it at sunset. Major-General Sykes says he was present when the order was delivered, and says, "It was as near sunset as I can remember." Colonel Locke, too, saw the delivery, and says it was between sundown and dusk. Captain Monteith, too, was present; he says it was sundown. The testimony of these three officers joined with that of General Porter would seem to be sufficient. But before the advisory board, sixteen years afterward, some new dispatches of Porter were produced. General McDowell produced one which is marked as No. 38 P. The whole context of this dispatch shows that Porter was at the time of writing it without any information from Pope, and eagerly awaiting it. He pleads, "Please let me know your designs." After McDowell had presented it to the board and it had been read, Porter with a listless curiosity took it up, when his eye fell upon the date obscurely written in the corner, "August 29, 6 P.M." This settles the matter. The 4.30 order was not received until after 6 P.M., August 29, 1862. It was received later, and, if later, it was received too late to make the attack it directed.

But had it been delivered earlier, as it ought to have been, Porter would not have made the attack. He could not make it. He could not attack upon the flank, much less upon the rear, of Jackson's force, as he was ordered to do. He knew that a great force had come to Porter's front of which the order showed his commanding general knew nothing. This

new force of the enemy blocked his way, and he could attack the flank or the rear of Jackson only by annihilating the force of Longstreet. Longstreet had twenty-five thousand men in front of Porter; Jackson had twenty-three thousand in front, but to his right; and Porter had what McDowell had left him, nine thousand. Porter could attack and lay their bodies at the feet of Longstreet's guns. The gentleman from Indiana [Mr. Browne] thought he ought to have done so, as he thought that the charge at Balaklava was war and not a spectacle. Porter thought otherwise, and his opinion seems to have been approved by General Grant, General Schofield, General Terry, and General Getty. He must bear this difference of opinion between himself and the gentleman from Indiana in such company as this.

It is charged that Porter did not know at that time that Longstreet's forces were before him. What evidence shows that he had this knowledge on the afternoon of the 29th of August, 1862? First, the whole tenor of his dispatches shows that he had watched the progress of the enemy's forces and had been constantly expecting Longstreet's appearance. On the 27th Porter says in a dispatch, No. 20, "Everything has moved up north," and says that he gets his information from an intercepted letter of Lee's. McDowell knew it, and said that Longstreet was coming through Thoroughfare Gap (volume i., page 349), and McDowell says he told Porter all he knew. Again, in the dispatch that Porter sent at six o'clock, August 29th, asking Pope for information, he says:

"From the masses of dust on our right, and from reports of scouts, I think the enemy are moving largely that way."

Earlier in the day Porter had captured prisoners from Longstreet's army. At noon McDowell showed him Buford's dispatch, which said that a large force had passed Gainesville, only three miles off, before nine o'clock that morning. (Volume i., page 82.) At about that time the enemy fired musketry at McDowell and Porter while their forces were together, and during all that afternoon Marshall and Morell were flying over the country testing the enemy at every point, and reported in

a dozen messages that they found him everywhere present in front and in strong force. (Dispatches 29 to 31, both inclusive, volume i., pages 333 to 335, 380 to 382.) These were the means by which Porter gained his information and he testified that he had it before the court-martial in 1862:

"To begin, the fundamental averment of the order upon which it all rests is entirely untrue. That averment is that my line of march as pursued under the joint order above referred to brought me in on the enemy's right flank. The fact is that my line of march as so pursued brought me not in on the enemy's right flank, but it brought me directly upon the front of a separate force of the enemy from ten to fifteen thousand strong, of the presence of which thus directly in my front General Pope, when he wrote the order, was wholly ignorant."

Do gentlemen want better evidence than this? Here is Pope's announcement on the 27th that the enemy is coming. Here is McDowell's testimony that he knew on the morning of the 28th that the enemy was coming through the gap. Here are prisoners taken on the morning of the 29th, and here are Marshall and Morell in a dozen messages in the afternoon of August 29th confirming his knowledge. And here, as well as anywhere else, let me say that I do not find that the new testimony, whether obtained from loyal or Union sources, introduces anything new. It only serves to confirm what Porter and his witnesses had testified to in the trial.

These were the offences. What was the court-martial that passed the sentence? It was composed of nine soldiers, gathered hastily in this city out of the gloomy atmosphere of defeat. They sat within the roar of the enemy's artillery and their faces were black with the smoke of battle. They were honest and honorable men, but they were human, and when a stern Secretary of War who made and unmade generals at his will ordered them to vote and go, they voted and went. When they voted, they gave, just as you and I would have done, to their country the benefit of the doubt. They sat forty-five days; they gave the accused thirteen days out of them. They neglected to produce any of his witnesses for

whom he asked, but Stanton's order was read in the morning and they closed the testimony that day and went.

The gentleman from Ohio [Mr. Keifer] said this was a "most august tribunal." Has he forgotten the Long Parliament and its prompt obedience and adjournment at the command of Cromwell, compared with which this "august tribunal" was a slow coach?

They voted and went. The world will never know but that it was by a vote of five to four that Stanton got his will. I hope it was not so. For one judge left the bench and went to the witness-box to testify for conviction, and four other judges received promotion within two weeks of the time they rendered their judgment. I wish the world on this point might appropriate the exclusive information of the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. Cutcheon]. He says: "The nine able generals who tried him with all the essential facts before them said there could be but one verdict." This is the information that we want, the unanimity of the nine generals, but unfortunately it is confined to that gentleman, and history may not appropriate it. He has, too, exclusive information, for which Englishmen would pay a million of pounds. They would give that or more to make Admiral Byng a subordinate and the commander of a single ship. It would wipe out a bloody page in British history, and the stinging epigram of Voltaire, who thought that the English had to kill every now and then a brave admiral to encourage the rest. The gentleman from Michigan had, also, exclusive, but this time inaccurate, knowledge of the course of history. He says, "Impartial history will declare that there could be but one verdict," yet the report of the minority which he signed calls attention to the opinion of a writer which it calls "a careful military historian, the author of perhaps the best history of our civil war that has been written." The report says that "he was supplied with ample facilities to inform himself and so situated that he can and does write without prejudice or passion." This historian, the Comte de Paris, writes:

"Impartial history should censure Lee's lieutenant rather than Pope's for his inaction during the 29th; and whether the

latter did or did not neglect the orders of his chief, it must be acknowledged that Porter's mere presence in front of Longstreet condemned forces outnumbering his own to remain inactive which otherwise might, with great advantage to the Confederate cause, have been employed to attack Porter or to re-enforce Jackson."

How happened my accurate friend from Michigan to make this great mistake? It came naturally from the unwillingness of his side to look at any new evidence. He read the first edition of this history, which censured Porter, and neglected to read the new edition, where the princely author, having read the new evidence, dared, like Grant and Schofield and Terry, to change his opinion in the presence of new and conclusive facts. And inasmuch as the ability, fidelity, and impartiality of the Comte de Paris have been so generously avouched by our opponents, let me read what was his final opinion:

"His attack"—

Speaking of that which the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. Browne] wished him to make on the night of August 29th, so that the country might have seen another Balaklava—

" His attack, therefore, could not have produced the results upon which the general-in-chief had counted. In spite of the impossibility of his executing literally Pope's order, and whatever may have been the orders given him by McDowell during the day, Porter might undoubtedly have pressed the enemy more closely. Perhaps he might even have obtained a partial success before Wilcox's arrival. But under no circumstances could this movement have had the slightest effect upon the result of the engagement which was now taking place on the right of the Federal army, for Longstreet could have resisted Porter with forces superior to the latter without being obliged to detach a single man from that engagement. Therefore impartial history should censure Lee's lieutenant rather than Pope's for his inaction during the 29th, etc."

But it is scarcely fair to leave the gentleman from Michigan alone to bear the errors which the side he so ably but inaccur-

ately defended has everywhere made. I have time now to allude to a misrepresentation, unintentionally made, of the opinions held with reference to the conduct of the trial by Reverdy Johnson. One gentleman assumed that this august tribunal, which closed its evidence upon the day that the Secretary of War ordered, which sent one of its judges to the witness-box and saw four others promoted within two weeks of the verdict, was all right, because Reverdy Johnson had said:

"Whatever may be the result, neither General Porter nor his friends can have any ground of complaint against the court. I consider the trial to have been perfectly fair."

This would have been a great help to the character of this august tribunal had it been true; unfortunately it was a newspaper story; fortunately I have the newspaper in which it was published, and across its lying face are written these words: "False, absolutely false.—R. J."

Here is the newspaper, and here is the indorsement, and here is the letter written by Reverdy Johnson, in which he says:

"I have obtained a copy of the *Chronicle*, and inclose you the article on the reply. The fact it states as to what I said in the presence of high officials of the Government is entirely false."

The generals who sat on the court-martial voted and went back to the fight. They hoped they had done their duty, but feared. Their uneasiness increased when lawyers, soldiers, and States began to examine their report. They examined it sitting apart from the noise of battle and they weighed calmly the evidence. Lawyers like Daniel Lord, Sidney Bartlett, B. R. Curtis, J. G. Abbott, William D. Shipman, and Charles O'Conor declared over their own signatures that the original verdict was against the original evidence. Said Daniel Lord:

"At the time of General Porter's trial I read the proceedings with astonishment at the testimony received and acted on, and am convinced that the trial was substantially conducted on an order to convict."

Said Judge Curtis:

"I think General Porter was improperly convicted on the evidence before the court which tried him, and he is at liberty to use this opinion when and where he chooses."

Said Bartlett:

"You are entitled to my judgment in the matter, which is that the evidence fails to support the charges against you, and that acquittal instead of conviction should have been the result."

Said Abbott:

"The finding of the court seems to me so unwarranted by the whole evidence that I should be glad to think it was the judgment of a tribunal utterly illegal and not recognized by the laws of the land."

Said Judge Shipman:

"With all deference to the members of the court, I thought then, and still think, their conclusions unwarranted by the evidence."

Said Charles O'Conor:

"I am convinced that a new trial ought to be had in the case of Fitz-John Porter. There is no adequate evidence of the misconduct alleged, and the record leaves it very doubtful whether any opinion was ever formed against him which can justly be regarded officially authoritative."

These lawyers, in writing, without pay, over their own signatures, thus declare that on the original evidence Porter should have been acquitted, and asked that the President of the United States should open the case. The President who put the last signature to the verdict expressed to a governor of New Jersey his ardent wish that it might be opened.

Governor Newell writes to Governor Randolph:

"I had several conversations with President Lincoln. The

President was much interested, and said cheerfully that he would gladly grant a reopening if any new evidence exculpatory of General Porter could be adduced. He said that he had no prejudice, but had been obliged to form his opinion from Judge Holt's examination, as in his multitude of cares he had not been able to make a personal investigation."

The charge has been made that notwithstanding these sentiments President Lincoln refused an application for a review of the case. No application was ever made. A few months after the judgment of the court-martial, Edward Everett, Robert C. Winthrop, Amos A. Lawrence, and others, of their own motion and without the knowledge of General Porter, prepared an eloquent memorial to the President, in which they asked him to reconsider the proceedings of the court-martial. The memorial got into the newspapers, as anything signed by such illustrious names naturally would, but was never presented. General Porter heard of it and sent his earnest request to Mr. Everett that no such action should be taken. He said wisely that it was premature. Another, who became President, and whose presence upon that court-martial gave its decision greater weight, on the 18th of January, 1875, moved in this very House that a board of examination might be appointed who should receive the new evidence which was offered. He introduced this resolution unsolicited, and wrote to General Porter that he believed it would be adopted; and here is the resolution:

"*Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled*, That it shall be the duty of the President of the United States to convene a board of officers of high rank in the army, unconnected with the armies or transactions in question, to examine the evidence alleged to have been discovered by and to be in the possession of Fitz-John Porter, unattainable at the time of his trial, and report what, if any, bearing such evidence, if substantiated, would have in the findings and sentence of court-martial in his case."

And here is the letter, with that signature so familiar and so

dear to many of us. I present it now because it has been made public before:

"WASHINGTON, D. C., February 19, 1875.

"DEAR SIR: Your two letters came duly to hand, together with the pamphlet. I owe you an apology for not answering you sooner.

"I introduced the bill to which you refer, not because I was conscious of any intentional wrong done you by the court, for I have never concurred in the severe reflections which have from time to time appeared in the public press on the motives and conduct of that court; but I am willing that any new evidence you may have shall be presented to the Government in an official form, and reported to the President by a board of officers who were in no way connected with the trial or with the operations of the army to which the trial related.

"I have spoken to several members of the Committee on Military Affairs, and understand them to be willing to report the bill to the House. They have not yet had an opportunity to do so, but I hope they will before the session closes.

"I shall consider your pamphlet as confidential, unless you otherwise direct me.

"Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

"J. A. GARFIELD.

"General FITZ-JOHN PORTER,
"Morristown, N. J."

Gentlemen who have used their wit to belittle the dignity and methods of the advisory board and claim great friendship for General Garfield would employ their wit better in telling how it differs from the board proposed in this resolution by him. Garfield proposed that the President should appoint. Garfield proposed that the appointees should be officers of high rank in the army. Garfield proposed that this board should examine the evidence alleged to have been discovered by and to be in possession of Fitz-John Porter, unattainable at the time of his trial, and report what, if any, bearing such evidence, if substantiated, would have in the findings and sentence of the court-martial in his case. How does the advisory board here proposed and described differ from the one whose report is

before us? There has not been even an attempt to show the difference. One gentleman, when pressed, exclaimed, "Garfield meant to have no such board as this."

Two of the board were so prejudiced against the accused that they at first refused to serve. Did the gentlemen object because one of the judges had no prejudice? This resolution introduced by Garfield shows that he was willing to have the proceedings of the court-martial open and its findings reviewed by an advisory board. And unless our opponents can destroy the records of the Forty-third Congress they should cease their efforts to misrepresent his position. I draw my conclusions from this public act of General Garfield. As his friend, I cannot produce his private letters to show how near under provocation he came to breaking the secrecy on which honor shut his lips, and if I did this dishonor to his memory I should want to find something stronger for my case than the Cox letter, where he says:

"I have not yet made, in the light of the new testimony, a careful strategic study of the field and map as you have done."

Can there be a stronger comment on the impropriety of this practice than the effort to claim an opinion from General Garfield out of a letter in which he admits that he had made no careful study of the subject? I, too, have letters, and they have allusions to this subject not unfavorable to the side I advocate. Here are two of them, but they are marked "Personal"; and I will not read them to hurt the dead that I may help the living.

A third President listened, approved, and acted. He named a board of examination just like that suggested by Garfield. He put on it "officers of high rank in the army, unconnected with the armies or transactions in question." He put on it Generals Schofield, Terry, and Getty, men whom the gallant Sherman declared to be "officers than whom three better do not exist in the army." They made, as Garfield suggested, "an examination of the evidence alleged to have been discovered by and to be in the possession of Fitz-John Porter, unattainable at the time of his trial," and they reported that

the bearing of such evidence should reverse the findings and sentence of the court-martial in his case. They had new evidence from the Confederates against whom General Porter was ordered to march. They had new evidence in the dispatches of General Porter which had been concealed or withheld. They had accurate maps of the ground and the disposition of the forces. On these they report and acquit Porter of all guilt. Gentlemen hesitate because they are unwilling that the proceedings of this court-martial, this august tribunal, should be reviewed. They claim that the review of a court-martial is unconstitutional. I do not agree with this view. They speak as if court-martials were the Supreme Court, and established by the Constitution. They were, however, created by the Legislature, and the power that created can review, correct, or destroy. But the action of the House to-day is not a review of the court-martial or its proceedings. We are hearing no appeal from that court. We are exercising a frequent and undisputed right. We are putting into the army of the United States an illustrious general whose services there will be valuable to the Commonwealth. If our action seems to reflect upon the view of General Porter's merits which the court-martial expressed, that is an unpleasant discrepancy between that board and this House. Let the verdict stand and go into history. But outside of the courts and irrespective of that court's decision the world now knows and admits that General Porter was a good soldier and suffered a wrong. And Congress, recognizing the inexorable logic of facts, accepts the conclusion and completes a pardon which the Executive began. It were as well to claim that the pardon of the President overruled the court-martial as that our action in restoring General Porter has overruled it.

The advisory board did not sit to review the trial of the court-martial. They sat to review a case in which the parties were the same, but the evidence was very different. Their report contributed to that general conviction and that popular knowledge on which with the report we are acting. On the facts derived from this report and elsewhere we are asked to restore General Porter to his position in the army. He does not ask money for services he was always ready and willing to

perform. He does not ask compensation for suffering and loss almost unparalleled in history. He only asks that the ranks of the army from which he was driven should be open to receive, and that the sword which was taken from him should be placed at his side. Shall this scanty justice be refused him? While I make the appeal I pause to admit his faults—serious faults, but excusable; faults, but not crimes. He was not a traitor. Punish him if, in his anxiety to furnish the information for which Burnside, McClellan, and Lincoln constantly pressed him, he spoke with a frankness and freedom which was characteristic of his nature, but contrary to the military discipline when he spoke of one who was his superior in the field. Remember that dispatches were coming from Lincoln, from McClellan, from Burnside, saying that their only knowledge of the momentous events transpiring in the front must come through him, and that, in grateful obedience to three men whom he especially honored and trusted, he wrote just what he thought; and remember, too, that history has stamped just what he thought and wrote as the truth. For this breach of military discipline, however, let him be punished. He had no faith in his commanding officer, and he improperly communicated his suspicions and dislikes to the President of the United States and to his commander-in-chief. This was an offence, and so was Washington's, when on the hot Sunday at Monmouth he cursed General Lee loudly for his cowardice or folly. But this offence is slight and has been already punished. Don't think of this little fault. Think of his great virtues. Remember how he fought on the 30th! That order came in time and from a superior who at last had learned his surroundings. And with Porter at their head the Fifth Army Corps charged into the gates of hell, and into the jaws of death. This was magnificent, and this was also war —war at its sternest. They went in six thousand—they came out leaving twenty-two hundred on the field. It was a loss to Porter of twenty-two hundred friends, for the Fifth Army Corps was, and is to-day, and while one veteran survives will be, the faithful, unfaltering, loyal friend of its gallant commander. Give him back to them.

Mr. Chairman, the chief of the rebellion walked down the

steps of this Capitol threatening to return and destroy it. He attempted its destruction and failed. Yet Jefferson Davis walks in freedom. Men who penned our soldiers in Andersonville and Libby still live.

Officers trained at West Point, whose treason is not investigated, for they practised it from the Mississippi to the Potomac, sit in this House. Shall Porter, innocent in heart if erring in act, alone be punished? Must he be a sacrifice for a nation?

The hero of Mexico and Malvern and Manassas asks only for justice; if you refuse him justice, I plead, against his wishes, for mercy. Take this innocent man from the side of Judas and Arnold and place him by the side of those who honor him—by the side of Getty and Sykes and Terry and Schofield and Grant.

INTERNATIONAL COMMERCE

Speech in the House of Representatives, December 19, 1884

The Bill to Regulate International Commerce under discussion

Mr. Phelps.—I rise to oppose the amendment. The discussion begins already to emphasize the unwisdom and injustice of the bill. It is a vain effort to make a code which shall control the management of railways in all cases. But these cases are infinite in number, and very nearly infinite in variety. How absurd to suppose that all these cases can be held in the iron grasp of half a dozen absolute restrictions! Absolute restrictions belong to morals, but have no control in railway management, where each case makes its own right and wrong. You may say to a man, "Thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not bear false witness," for theft, adultery, and slander are everywhere and always wrong. But you cannot say to a railroad company, "You shall not discriminate, you shall not rebate, you shall not pool, you shall not charge more for a longer haul," because in many cases all these methods are right and in many cases they are necessary —necessary even to the very existence of the road. And because they are necessary often to their very existence the railways will elude, evade, and openly transgress the restrictions,

looking to popular opinion to shield them from the penalty; just as the gentleman from Texas, if his life were threatened, would, in defending it, violate all laws and escape all punishment.

Nor in so doing are the people indifferent to their rights; they are watchful of them and are willing to judge the future by the past. They see that the laws of man and the laws of nature have shielded them in the past; why should they doubt them in the future? The law of common carriers in every State inhibits injustice and inequality. The laws of nature, acting in the sphere of commerce, make the greed and ambition of man the instruments of justice and equality.

They see that united the result has been a constant triumph of progress and reform. Does any one dispute history? Are there not more railways and better service than ever before? Have we not more trains and better, more equipment and better, cheaper and more efficient management everywhere?

Does the gentleman from Texas deny that goods and passengers are carried cheaper by us than anywhere else in the world, and cheaper by us now than ever before? Perhaps he fears that these great laws of nature have lost their force. Have they? Was competition ever more aggressive on water and on land? Why, the gentleman from New York [Mr. Hewitt] cannot take his first excursions over a new road without seeing from his window the surveying party that already lays the deadly parallel. And if you fear that some obstacles are too mighty, remember that ten years ago we all said, with the Erie, the Central, and the Pennsylvania railways in the field, New York can secure no relief except from the resources of the national Treasury. But while we spoke competition, raising $100,000,000 without public knowledge or public solicitation, threw the Nickel Plate and West Shore into the arena, and there they will remain.

Nor has the desire to succeed in business ceased to be a rule, which includes railway managers in its healthy influence.

Managers were never more solicitous for business and never more ready to make sacrifices to get it. They know that rivals are so many they must themselves create and develop it, and in a one-sided partnership, where the customer gets all

the benefit, they aid him in its creation or development. I challenge contradiction when I say that there never was a time when a company that wished to open a mine or a factory could get better returns than now. It is almost accurate to say that the miner or the manufacturer can fix his own rates for the years of experiment. Nor has the power of public opinion weakened. It controls the management of railways as a management and as individual men. The management knows that the surest path to business is that of public favor; that the popular road makes money, and to secure this popularity they spend money lavishly, they make concessions generously. Nor is generally enough stress laid on the character of the management and their natural desire as men to have the approbation of their neighbors and to secure that good report, that good reputation which is the highest prize of life.

Do not confound the managers of whom I speak, and whom I honor, with the great speculators in its securities, whom I despise. It is the speculators and the stock exchange that receive the public attention; it is the railway and its managers who deserve it. It is a great injustice to confound them. The managers are men of high character and great abilities. Theirs is a profession, and they are proud of it. They are sure to spend their lives in its practice, and most of them practise it in the same railway corporation. They are faithful, public-spirited, and as a rule honored and beloved by those among whom they live and with whom they deal. In their desire to retain and deserve this good opinion of their vicinage they are more apt to sacrifice their road than the public. But the great speculators, unlike you or me or them, remote from intercourse with the customers of the road, are indifferent to public opinion, and should be curbed. But, remember, these men, while their names are allied to the roads, almost never interfere with their practical management. Their sole interest is in the stock. That they seize; they hold it for a day, until they have worked their own wicked will on it, and then they cast it out dishonored, to be the prey of the next adventurer. If they retain it longer, it is only to elect a board of directors which shall suffer them to manipulate the securities, and, that accomplished, their interest ends.

The managers of the road meantime go on with their regular business, and have no more connection with the speculators whose names are in stock circles allied with their roads than you or I, Mr. Speaker, except the bitter disgust with which they see these bad men so confusing the distinction between themselves and the actual managers that in the public mind they are apt to stand in the same light and receive the same censure.

Let, then, the laws of man and of nature continue their work of progress and reform. Why attempt to restrict, why pass restrictions which will interfere with these general laws, which are working out the results you pretend to wish? Your effort is vain; your restrictions will be disregarded.

INTERSTATE COMMERCE

Controversy with Mr. Reagan

January 7, 1885, Mr. Reagan, of Texas, having the floor of the House, made a speech reflecting upon Mr. Phelps personally, in reference to the position the New Jersey member took in relation to railroads in his speech of December 9, 1884. The latter followed Mr. Reagan immediately in reply

Mr. Phelps was recognized, and asked how much time he was entitled to.

The Speaker.—The gentleman from New Jersey is entitled to five minutes under the rules of the House.

Mr. Phelps.—It will be scarcely possible to treat of this whole subject, as touched by the gentleman from Texas, in so short a time. The time, however, is sufficient for me to say that I recognize in his remarks just that intellectual defect, if I may say it without offence, which has made it impossible for him to prepare a bill which would be operative and therefore useful; one that would work, and therefore that could be enforced. It is an inability to make proper and natural distinctions. I stated what under the laws of trade and nature will be; and the gentleman claims that I stated what ought to be, as if I were the Almighty, and threatened what should be. He has failed to recognize the distinction between a prophecy

and a threat. I made no threat. I have no power to carry a threat into execution, and certainly have no wish to see the prophecy fulfilled and the business of this country blocked by the gentleman's bill and the action of the railways under it. Whether I am a true prophet or not time will show. Whether I have grounds for making this prophecy or not the past and its history fortunately can show.

. . . . . .

Mr. Speaker, perhaps I now yield to an indiscretion—I certainly yield to a very natural feeling of injury, in view of the fact that it is the gentleman from Texas who makes this attack and seems to inspire it with a certain suggestion of personal feeling. I recognize this, I say, with an impression that it is unbecoming and unjust. He has been pleased to class me as among those citizens of this Republic who by frugality and industry, by honorable and honest methods, I hope, have accumulated a competence. He has been pleased to call me a rich man. If I may make a personal confession—and I make it now only under his taunt and in the interest of the truth, which we all search for in this great discussion—I can say this: If once I enjoyed that distinction, such as it is, which belongs to wealth, that distinction has been diminished, has been almost entirely destroyed; and if I were asked where I found the origin of my misfortunes, I should be obliged to say that the gentleman himself knows the origin; and the gentleman himself lives in the very section and uses the same railway in which half a million of dollars intelligently and honestly invested were sunk, and apparently were sunk forever.

I have no hesitation in charging that the railway which made his home at Palestine valuable, and gave it distinction other than the solitary distinction which it enjoyed before of being the residence of an able and patriotic citizen, obtained its railway connection, secured its growth and all the advantages which it now enjoys and which the gentleman from Texas himself shares, through the efforts and sacrifices of myself and some dozen of my friends, who, in a New York office, agreed to embark in the enterprise. It was an enterprise to build a railway which, starting at Houston, should traverse the State and open up counties which were then almost worthless

to connection with the North and the South. This was an honorable and a useful purpose; I put in my money cheerfully, and citizens associated with me, of more wealth but with equally honest purpose, put in still larger sums. The money was expended, dollar for dollar, in the construction of the road; we took for it stock at par; we received for it nothing else, not even bonds, which we might have sold.

It was our pride to test and settle this question: Could a railway be built honestly, with each dollar that was actually invested represented and no other, no watering of stock or bonds, and pay a fair interest upon the money invested? So dollar after dollar, to the amount of some millions, each one of which passed through my hands, was faithfully sent down to the State of Texas and put into the Great Northern Railroad. It was invested in buying land, in making cuts and fillings, in bridging streams, in purchasing and laying the rails upon the road which now connects the Gulf of Mexico with the great system of railways by which Palestine has become an important station on a great through route. That was the result for Palestine and Texas. What has been the result for us? Our money is in that railroad, honestly and carefully expended as a man expends his own, and as yet I have not received one dollar of interest upon that stock, nor do I ever expect to obtain any. The investment would be to me and to my friends an absolute loss, that money would all have been lost, except for this precaution: I foresaw the benefits that would be received by the gentleman from Texas and others who owned land along the route, so I wisely made some investment in it myself.

The lands did receive the benefit—were so far benefited by this New York money which was made to enrich them, and among them the farm and other real estate of my friend in Palestine, that our loss, although not recouped, was somewhat broken by their appreciation in value. Land on this road now sells for two, three, or four times its value at the time this undertaking was begun.

If, then, this railroad has accomplished so much for his section; if it has made us who gave it lose all of the money which built it; if we built it nor asked one dollar from the gentle-

man, though his farm was sure to get an advantage from it; if not one dollar was received from any other citizen of Texas, is it strange that having had this experience in that State and similar experience in other States we are hurt at the reception we receive here when we get up and speak not from theory but from experience, not immodestly, not arrogantly, telling only what we know, even if we do in the interest of truth tell the gentleman from Texas that we speak of actual knowledge while he speaks only as a theorist.

Nothing would give me greater pleasure than to show exactly how each one of his four restrictions—that against discrimination, against rebates, against pooling, against charging more for shorter than for longer hauls,—all of them would injure every single acre of his farming land around Palestine, and crush, as if under an avalanche, every growing industry in its streets.

Mr. Reagan.—In the first place, Mr. Speaker, I wish to disabuse the mind of the gentleman from New Jersey that I was in any way animated by any feeling of special malevolence against him, as such was not the fact. I was dealing with a great public question, and to the language I then used I refer the House and the country to see whether the animadversions which I felt it my duty to make are justly founded or not.

I should regret, Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman had his investment sacrificed in building up the country or its railroads, but I apprehend the gentleman's picture is deficient in the statement of all the facts. He says the investment was made in that railroad. There were two of them, but both were under one charter. One of them received sixteen sections of six hundred and forty acres of land to the mile, and the other received twenty sections of six hundred and forty acres of land to the mile. The one which received the smaller amount received a bonus, upon which I am now paying a tax, to the amount of $150,000, from the poor county in which I live, in order to induce the building of a depot there. And I contributed also my full portion of about $50,000 in money and property in order to secure the building of a depot of the other road at that place.

Therefore, while the gentleman is speaking of the munifi-

cence of his liberality, he ought to remember that he and the others to whom he has referred received liberal charters from the State and most generous treatment on the part of the county in which I live.

I wish to say further, that notwithstanding the magnificent treatment on the part of the State, the county, and district in which I live to these railroads, there is not one there to-day who would desire to see any injury befall these railroads, so far as I know. We wish them to prosper. We regard them as valuable, as excellent servants; but we regard them also as detestable masters. We do not wish them as masters. We do not intend to have them as masters. We wish them well. We hope they may be profitable. In view of the liberal charters granted to the roads in which the gentleman is a stockholder, besides the bonus of land and money given by others in the State, I do not think that his remarks on this subject were quite what they ought to have been.

Mr. Phelps.—Mr. Speaker, I rise to oppose the amendment. I did not mean to say the railroads did not receive any aid from the State of Texas, nor do I think I made any statement as to warrant that conclusion. What I said was, that there was no citizen of Texas asked to subscribe, or who did, so far as I know, subscribe one dollar of his private funds to the construction of this railroad. It was the gift exclusively of Northern capital.

With reference to the generosity of the State I want to say this: The inducement to build this railroad, for at that time the unoccupied country offered no business to encourage its construction, was the formal act of the State by which it agreed to give us its bonds. I regret that truth requires me to state what I had no intention of stating, and what is now drawn out by the comments of the gentleman, that the State of Texas, having agreed with us that in consideration of building this road it would give us of those bonds a certain number to the mile, did absolutely refuse to keep its bargain, and did repudiate its obligation.

Every effort was made by appeals to the Legislature and to the Executive and elsewhere throughout the State to obtain a fulfilment of their promise, but the State persisted. The

bonds were prepared, signed, and ready for delivery, but Texas refused to issue and deliver them to the railroad company. Had the State of Texas kept its promises, had it not repudiated its just obligations, and had it given to us the $8000 to the mile that were promised—a repudiation and refusal, which they wisely made after the railway was constructed and built—I believe that before this time we might have received some interest upon our investment. As it is, the investment is there; it produces no results for the investors. And the road is there; it is run satisfactorily and produces valuable results to Texas and its citizens who use it. It satisfies all their reasonable wants; it is giving them rates of freight and passage cheaper than any known outside of the United States; and yet we are not getting from it one dollar of interest. And while the gentleman from Texas tells us that the charter is so good and the State is so good that we shall see in time a profit, are we impatient when we complain in the face of his statement that he would be glad to administer the investment himself under the laws of the United States, that we ought to be paid some of the interest of the last twelve years before our property is taken from us?

I would like to show, Mr. Speaker, in the three minutes remaining, how the first restriction imposed by the gentleman would affect his own home at Palestine. He would forbid all discrimination. In the shipment of all classes of freights brought to the same station at the same time, he would enforce, under penalty, equal dispatch. If the railway moved one parcel before another it would be punished. Well, let us see how such a provision would work at Palestine. Let us suppose three kinds of freight are delivered at this station for transportation on the same day. Let us assume that one is a shipment of fruit, one a shipment of coal, and another a shipment of grain. They are delivered at the Palestine station at the same time, and must therefore, under the Reagan law, be carried off at the same time. The daily freight train comes along to its regular morning task with the usual number of vacant cars ready for the ordinary needs of Palestine, but the three shipments make more than the usual tonnage. The capacity of the empty cars is not sufficient for all the freight,

and only part of it can be taken. The wise conductor, remembering the law and knowing its penalty, glances at the three piles of freight, then at the empty cars on his train, and recognizes the fact that he has not accommodations for the whole. He signals the engineer, the whistle is blown, and the train goes southward to Houston, ignoring fruit, coal, and corn. All three classes of goods are left at the station. What is the result? The fruit, which might have been carried forward without injury, is either injured or destroyed by the delay. The coal, which was needed at Houston to keep in blast an iron furnace, is left at Palestine; operations stop at the furnace, its fires burn low, and its workers stand in enforced idleness—loss of capital and of work.

The law of the gentleman from Texas must be charged with the loss of this work and capital and with the loss or destruction of the fruit. And with what is it credited? What has it accomplished? Nothing; and all this is done in order that the grain, which might have been delivered days after without loss or injury to anybody, shall have the same facilities and be delivered at the same time as the coal and the fruit. It has estopped the owner of the grain from assailing his member of Congress at Palestine with the complaint that some one's coal and some one's fruit were carried by the railway before his grain; that it was an outrageous discrimination, and that he demands that the laws of the United States shall be made to prevent such outrages. And that is all it has done.

[During the delivery of the foregoing remarks, when the five minutes of Mr. Phelps had expired, Mr. Kean of New Jersey obtained the floor and yielded his time to Mr. Phelps.]

INCREASING SUBSIDIES TO MAIL-CARRYING STEAMERS

Speech in the House of Representatives, February 13, 1885

Mr. Phelps.—Mr. Chairman, if I get the opportunity I shall move to amend the section by striking out the limit of $600,000, so that the net revenue of our foreign mail may

be placed without reduction in the hands of the Postmaster-General to use for these great objects. The net revenue last year was $1,700,000. This surely is not too much to expend for objects every way worthy, and especially dear at this time to the hearts of the American people. It is to revive American commerce and to re-create the merchant marine, of which our fathers were so proud. The sum is small compared with the last sums spent by our rivals in these great enterprises. They give all their net revenue; more, they give all their gross revenue; more, they add to it all that their treasuries will allow.

England gave last year a million and a half of dollars more than her gross receipts, making nearly five millions; France gave four and a half millions; Italy two millions; Austria one million; Spain one million; little Holland $300,000. Our great Republic gave $327,000! Are you proud of this, gentlemen of the committee? And why should we treat our foreign service so much worse than our domestic? Will members believe it? We sent our steamships the dreary width of the Pacific and paid them $2\frac{3}{4}$ cents per mile. We sent our steamships down the coast that they might deliver the mail in sight of their homes, and paid them 57 cents per mile; and if you want to carry in your minds a neat illustration of the crying injustice of this discrimination, remember that to carry the mail from Brashear to Galveston, a single night's trip, we paid a company $50,000; and at the same time we paid the vessels that carried the American flag to China, to Japan, and to Australia the munificent sum of $14,849.

If we pay 57 cents a mile to carry our mails on the coast, is 50 cents a mile too much to pay the American owner who sends his steamer half way round the globe?

England, and America, and France are struggling for the commerce of South American ports. England sells in them one hundred and twelve millions of her products; France, seventy-seven millions, and the United States, sixty-four millions. Why this anomaly? Our neighbors on this continent prefer our manners and our merchandise, but American men and American manufactures can reach them only by Liverpool. A double trip across the Atlantic is a burden which

crushes even American energy and hope; and we have to see the country tributary to these ports supplied from the European market. What ought to be our home market is left for foreigners to profit by.

Non-manufacturing countries everywhere are the markets for which civilized nations compete. We can secure them only by sending our flag and our mail-bags. Trade never fails to follow the flag. Do you doubt it? Do you doubt that these are the pioneers that open the way, or that when the way is open American manufacturers can not walk profitably in it?

Look at our commerce under this medicine. Look at the countries where we have managed to secure some kind of regular or irregular communication. Since 1866 our Mexican trade has multiplied four times; our Central American trade eighteen times; and our Australian trade three times.

Our exports to Mexico were $3,700,000, now they are $14,300,000; to Central America were $120,000, now they are $2,000,000; to Australia were $3,400,000, now they are $9,600,000. And yet these are the very countries where British trade fights us with the resources of a generous government and the determination to check and destroy our competition. Last year Great Britain paid the steamships that carried her flag and mail-bags to Mexico and the West Indies $420,000; we gave $9,800. She gave for the encouragement of her trade in China and the East Indies $1,700,000; we gave $14,800. Does the American merchant have a fair chance with the British merchant? We ask that he should have some aid in this bitter competition. And my friend from Pennsylvania [Mr. Bayne], generally considerate and wise, strives to frighten us from giving it by raising the ghost of a subsidy. This is too bad, for the average member starts at the ghost of a subsidy as Macbeth started at the ghost of Banquo. And yet this ghost ought "to down." This is no subsidy. A subsidy is a gift without consideration. Or it is a payment so excessive as to grossly overmatch the service rendered and to become a gratuity. Here is no gift, no excessive payment, no subsidy. The provision asks only a payment scarcely adequate to the service rendered; a service vital to the interests

of our manufactures and to the men they employ; a service vital to the existence of American shipping.

I hope, Mr. Chairman, that this provision will pass, for it is the first step in a policy which will revive our manufactures, employ our labor, and place again in the ports of the world the vessels of American merchants busied in the pursuits of peace.

CHINESE INDEMNITY

Speech in the House of Representatives, February 13, 1886, on the bill to indemnify Chinese for damages done them in a miners' riot in Wyoming Territory in 1885

Mr. Phelps.—Their houses were burned; their goods were pillaged; twenty-eight of them were killed and fifteen wounded. And the only provocation was that they would not join in a strike. That is the case, and the question is, "What are we going to do about it?" and the answer ought to be, and I believe will be, "Do what the administration recommends and what this bill provides for and pay for the property destroyed." Not for charity's sake, but for solid reasons. Because it is good policy, as urged by the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. Worthington]; because it is a single reciprocity for a hundred cases, where China has paid an indemnity to us, as urged by his colleague, Mr. Hitt, and because it is an international obligation, as urged by the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. Rice].

It is good policy, because we have more property in China than China has in the United States. We need millions to measure our property, thousands will measure theirs; and if we change the old rule of practice and adopt the new one, that the National Government may throw the obligation to defend the rights of foreigners on one of its members, call it State, Territory, province, or vice-royalty, the United States will in the future lose a great deal more than China. If the new rule had prevailed in the East, the great fortunes which have been brought to this country, and whose splendor is yet conspicuous in Wall Street and Fifth Avenue, would never have got across the Pacific. But there is a moral obligation

stronger than these considerations of policy. We ought to pay this indemnity to China, because China has paid indemnities to us in a score, perhaps in a hundred cases similar to this, only less meritorious.

The history of our diplomatic relations with China for nearly fifty years has been only the history of prompt and greedy claims for indemnity on our part and of prompt and generous payment on its part. It has paid for the rights of every American citizen when violated. It has paid for the violated rights of Chinese subjects when they were connected with ours; as when they paid a Chinese landlord, whose house was destroyed by a mob, because an American leased it, and as when they paid for the property and clothing of native helpers, which was lost in the service of American missionaries. This is the way China paid indemnities up to 1858. In this fashion she paid them in detail, then she paid them in gross. She took more than $700,000, gave it to the United States Government, and said: "Take this and pay your countrymen."

We took it, we paid all claims generously, with twelve-per-cent. interest; but the generosity of China was so ample that after all this we had left nearly one-third of the original sum to return to China. China did this and shamed the grudging spirit in which Christian countries pay their international bills.

This is the moral obligation, but there is a legal one—the international obligation. The United States has treaties with the Empire of China. In these treaties she promised to protect Chinese subjects. The United States has failed to keep its covenants. It did not protect Chinese subjects, and it is liable in damages for a broken contract unless it can establish and maintain as a doctrine of international law that when a nation makes a treaty with another nation and breaks one of its covenants it can shift its liability by saying that it was the covenant and therefore the liability of one of its members.

Unfortunately it is easy to declare this doctrine, but it seems impossible to establish and maintain. All writers on international law from Grotius to Woolsey have examined and rejected it. We have accepted it in declaration but have always rejected it in practice. We have generally asserted this doctrine most vehemently at the very moment we were

about to transgress it. Our habit has been to assert bad law and practise good. We did this in the famous case at New Orleans. A mob destroyed the property of Spanish subjects. Her Spanish Majesty demanded indemnity.

The powerful voice of Daniel Webster was heard in reply. He declared this bad law magnificently and referred them to the State of Louisiana and its courts. Her Spanish Majesty ignored all this eloquence in declaration of bad law and asked for the usual practice, and the Secretary of State recommended Congress to vote the indemnity and say nothing more of the State's liability. But more significant yet was the case in China at the time of the Anglo-Chinese war. China, learning the verbal tricks of civilization, concluded she would declare bad law and see the result. She told our Department of State that the vice-royalty of Canton was the party liable and that in its tribunals the American claimants must find redress. Our Secretary, Lewis Cass, said little against the bad law in the plea.—How could he?—but insisted on the usual good practice, and China, the nation, the empire, paid the bill.

And in European countries the same uniformity of action prevails, accompanied still in some cases by the same declaration of the bad law, that would relieve national obligation and substitute local. Indeed, comprehensive as was the claim made yesterday by the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. Rice], that no text-book in its summary of principles and no civilized nation in its practice had ever followed this bad law, I believe it is the truth. If, then, in this case we put the bad law for the first time into practice against a semi-barbarous nation, public opinion will say we did it because China was weak and could not enforce its rights, and the world will compare the pagan civilization of the Chinese Empire with the Christian civilization of the great American Republic, and not to our credit.

The Chairman.—The time of the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. Phelps] has expired.

Mr. Henley.—I desire to ask the gentleman from New Jersey a question.

The Chairman.—The time of the gentleman from New Jersey has expired.

Mr. Phelps.—I shall be glad to answer the gentleman's question if time be given me.

The Chairman.—The gentleman from Kentucky [Mr. McCreary] is entitled to the floor.

Mr. Henley.—Will the gentleman from Kentucky permit me to put a question to the gentleman from New Jersey?

Mr. McCreary.—I yield for that purpose, but I trust the gentleman will be very brief.

Mr. Henley.—It was stated yesterday, and the gentleman from New Jersey doubtless heard the statement, that Mr. Blaine, when Secretary of State, adopted a different rule from that for which the gentleman contends and which is asserted by the Committee on Foreign Affairs in presenting this bill; in other words, that upon outrages being committed upon certain Chinese subjects in the city of Denver and upon indemnity being demanded, Mr. Blaine or Mr. Evarts, I forget which——

Mr. McKenna.—Both of them. It was I who made the statement yesterday.

Mr. Henley.—Denied the right to indemnity. I should like to hear from the gentleman from New Jersey on that subject, because upon these matters everybody knows him to be *facile princeps*.

Mr. Phelps.—If I answer the gentleman in the way he wishes me to do, I do not see that it involves any contradiction of my statement that Daniel Webster, Lewis Cass, Hamilton Fish, James G. Blaine, and Frederick T. Frelinghuysen all made the declarations I have cited. I admitted that the declarations had been made by almost all our administrations that we were exempt from obligation under a treaty if we could refer the party complaining to a local authority or tribunal; but at the same time I claimed that there was no break in the practice of these very Secretaries, who, after making their declarations, followed the fashion of American diplomacy and paid the indemnity whenever it was due and demanded.

POST-OFFICE APPROPRIATION BILL

Speech in the House of Representatives, May 19, 1886. The question under discussion, whether the House should appropriate $375,000 for the transportation of foreign mails, or appropriate $800,000 as provided by amendment of the Senate

MR. MILLARD having the floor, said: "I yield the remainder of my time to the gentleman from New Jersey."

THE CHAIRMAN.—The gentleman has twenty-two minutes of his time remaining.

MR. PHELPS.—This amendment, and especially the action of the Senate when they passed it, is full of encouragement to the friends of American shipping. Thirty-nine Senators voted for the measure; only eighteen voted against it. In the discussion and in the division there was no effort to make it a party question. Each Senator spoke and each Senator voted according to his view of the merits of the question, and on the final passage eight Democratic Senators——

MR. BLOUNT.—I rise to a question of order.

THE CHAIRMAN.—The gentleman will state it.

MR. BLOUNT.—It is not in order to comment on the opinions or action of Senators.

THE CHAIRMAN.—The Chair thinks the point of order is well taken.

MR. PHELPS.—I am not making a comment upon the opinions of Senators beyond stating the facts which are given to the world by the press and the Congressional Record. I think the gentleman from Georgia should be proud that eight Democratic Senators had the courage——

THE CHAIRMAN.—The gentleman will suspend his remarks till the point of order is determined.

MR. PHELPS.—I trust that the objection of the gentleman from Georgia to hearing the truth about the action of his colleagues in the Senate will not be taken out of my time.

MR. BLOUNT.—The gentleman from New Jersey is dealing unfairly in continuing his remarks.

MR. PHELPS.—Why could not the matter of order be settled if I simply say I read in the public prints that eight Democratic Senators voted to give free ships to American commerce?

MR. BLOUNT.—I call the gentleman to order.

THE CHAIRMAN.—The Chair asks the gentleman from Georgia to cite the rule under which he makes the point of order.

MR. PHELPS.—If this is exhausting my time I would rather print the extract from the Congressional Record which gave the vote and pass on.

MR. BURROWS.—I presume while the point of order is being considered that will not be deducted from the gentleman's time.

THE CHAIRMAN.—The Chair will take care of that.

MR. STEELE.—I rise to a question of order.

THE CHAIRMAN.—The gentleman will state it.

MR. STEELE.—Is it in order to delay the business of the House while the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. Blount] is studying the rules?

THE CHAIRMAN.—The business of the House is not being delayed. The rule is being sought at the request of the Chair.

MR. BLOUNT.—I will ask the Clerk to read from page 132 of *Jefferson's Manual*.

The Clerk read as follows:

"It is a breach of order in debate to notice what has been said on the same subject in the other House, or the particular votes or majorities on it there, because the opinion of each House should be left to its own independency, not to be influenced by the proceedings of the other; and the quoting them might beget reflections leading to a misunderstanding between the two Houses."

THE CHAIRMAN.—The Chair stated to the gentleman from New Jersey that he thought the point of order was well taken, but would be willing to hear from the gentleman after the reading of the rule.

MR. BLOUNT.—Mr. Chairman, then, with the view of saving time, I will withdraw the point of order.

THE CHAIRMAN.—The point of order being withdrawn, the gentleman from New Jersey will proceed.

MR. PHELPS.—I thank the gentleman for waiving his point of order and will trespass no further than to say that I read in

the public press and the record of Congress that eight Democratic Senators had the courage to vote to give new ships to American commerce and new markets to American manufactures. And now, the Senate having done its duty, it is time for this House to do theirs. The measure has so many advantages, it supplies so many wants, we ought promptly to adopt it. We want steamships; this measure will give them. We want markets for our surplus; this measure will give them. We want to defend our coasts; this measure will give us a merchant marine, the militia of the sea—the most efficient means of doing it.

Such a measure, so useful, so reasonable, we shall refuse to pass, if we do reject it, because its enemies call it a subsidy. It is not a subsidy, for it is neither a gift nor an excessive payment. What is it? It is a fair payment to American ships for carrying the mails, and if you ask me how I ascertain that the payment is a fair one, I answer, as I ascertain the fair price for any commodity or any service. I go out into the markets and I ask the price, and in this case I go out into the market of the world and learn that this price which we propose to pay for carrying our mail is less than the price paid by any other nation. No one has yet challenged the proposition, except in the case of Germany. Let us pause, then, for a moment to look at the history of Germany in this relation. Germany did not encourage her shipping by liberal payment or gift, and because she did not the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. Blount] in great enthusiasm exclaimed: "How business-like! How worthy the great statesman at the head of the German Empire!"

But what was the result of all this business and all this statesmanship? Germany secured only two steamship lines worthy of mention. They run between Hamburg and Bremen and New York, between old and wealthy ports. These have done a good business and increased their ships, but only because they had the business of carrying emigrants, which is always lucrative. A line to Australia tried to live; but its service was so wandering and dilatory, it was such a fleet of tramps, that the Germans sent their mails and their freight in British bottoms; and look at the result! The old principle

operated: business followed the flag, and the Germans found that London bankers got all of the exchanges and London merchants were beginning to get all of the business. So Germany acted the part of wisdom. These facts were stated in a memorial, which was the foundation of new legislation in the Reichstag, and upon their presentation the German Parliament acted—reversed its policy, and started courageously upon the path long trod by its successful neighbors. It agreed to give $1,000,000 to a single line for carrying the German mail one year to Australia. One million dollars to a single line! The gentleman from Georgia praised the old policy of Germany, which Germany publicly declared was a failure. Why does he refuse to praise the new policy of Germany? Must we take the words from his mouth, and, in view of $1,000,000 voted directly to the North German Lloyds, exclaim for him: "How business-like! How worthy the great statesman at the head of the German Empire!"

But we think this an excessive payment. We have more moderate notions. Our Pacific Mail Company has for years been performing this same service upon almost the same terms. She has carried our mails to Australia promptly, safely, and frequently. But we did not give her $1,000,000; we gave her $20,000; and for this paltry sum she carried them during the year 1884 750,000 miles.

This is the service rendered to the mail service of this country; and this is all for many a year we have paid her for it. And yet the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. Guenther] has spoken of this company as an enemy to the country. Yes, an enemy, if to multiply our trade many times and to get no pay for doing so is worthy of censure. Yes, if to multiply our trade with Australia three times, our trade with Mexico four times, and our trade with Central America fifteen times, and to do it for nothing, is the act of a public enemy, but not otherwise. Yet this is what the Pacific Mail has done for us in the last ten or fifteen years.

This is the payment that Germany makes nowadays for carrying her mails. I will take one example from the policy of France, and choose one that is near by and familiar, because it is easier to understand and to remember.

For many years France has had a steamship line plying between Havre and New York. It was old and faithful, but not excellent. France sought to improve it. She offered an inducement, and as a result five new steamers of magnificent proportions are entering the line. And what is the inducement? France gives each steamer that makes the round trip $14,500. The round trip is 6000 miles; so if we pay the highest rate warranted by this amendment the United States will pay to the American steamer that renders this service $3000. France pays $14,500 for what we are to pay—if our opponents will let us give this "subsidy"—$3000. And Germany now pays $1,000,000 for what the United States has been paying $20,000.

I will not seek other examples, but will repeat my original declaration without fear of contradiction, that no nation pays so little for similar services as we propose to do even under this amendment. And I also repeat, in view of that truth, that this amendment proposes only a fair payment to American ships for carrying the American mails.

Now, let us consider what we get besides if we make this fair payment. We get two things that we want very much—steamships and trade. And if you ask me again how do I know this, my answer is: First, because there are capitalists versed in nautical business who have again and again declared their readiness to establish new lines between all the old ports and to any of the new if the vote of this amendment can be assured for years; but, secondly, because this has been the policy of all European nations and has always had the same results. This nation wanted ships and wanted trade. They paid their money after this fashion we are speaking of and they got ships and trade, and almost in the ratio in which they paid their money. England paid the most, so England got the largest returns.

Since 1840 England has paid $250,000,000 in such subsidies. A monstrous sum, and yet there was thrift in it. She paid $250,000,000, but she has to-day 55 per cent. of the foreign tonnage of the world and 44 per cent. of all its tonnage. Englishmen can proudly look over the world and see these results, and if there were time for details how many separate

proofs of the wisdom of this policy might be cited like this. The United States now sends across the seas 25,000,000 tons annually. Statisticians say it is fair to assume that each ton costs $6. If that is so, this country alone pays to Great Britain $150,000,000 for freight each year. But this only shows the liberality with which England spends money to encourage the mercantile marine. I want to show further, by a little incident, the courage and energy with which, under all circumstances, she pursues this policy. France got her steamship line into Brazil first—Brazil for whose trade civilization competes and whose trade ought to be ours. This French line carried English mails and freight with safety and dispatch. It was practically direct connection for England, as the French vessels stopped at Southampton.

But this did not satisfy England. She had learned the lesson too well that trade follows the flag, and she determined to send her own flag to Brazil, so she made this extraordinary offer, to guarantee eight per cent. on all the capital which should be invested in a new English line, and this was in effect the form of her guarantee: If the profits made by this company shall not equal eight per cent. on the capital invested, then the Government will make up the deficiency. Was it a bad investment? Look at the trade of Brazil to-day. France and England to-day buy from Brazil about as much of its productions as we. These two nations buy between fifty and sixty millions of Brazilian products, and so does the United States. But when we look for the reciprocity how different the picture! Brazil buys of the United States nine millions; Brazil buys of France and England forty-nine millions of merchandise. And yet, as the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. Burrows] showed, the bulk of the merchandise which Brazil buys consists of just those articles which are American specialties, and which our countrymen can produce better and cheaper than any competitors. The articles consist largely of cotton goods, machinery, agricultural implements. But France and England are willing to pay for it and own their transportation. We have no direct communication, and that disadvantage more than balances the natural advantages which we possess.

I have no time to speak of our long coast, which no navy

can protect, and which must be left to the care of our mercantile marine.

THE SPEAKER.—The gentleman from New Jersey has already exceeded his time by two minutes. But the Chair will recognize him in his own right of——

MR. BINGHAM.—How much time does the gentleman want?

MR. PHELPS.—Five minutes are enough.

MR. BINGHAM.—I will yield eight minutes of my time to the gentleman from New Jersey.

MR. PHELPS.—Mr. Speaker, I shall not abuse my friend's courtesy, and I will sum up the rest of the points I wanted to make.

There are several questions the friends of this measure ask and never get an answer. Let me repeat them. Why do the opponents of the measure do so much and pay so much for our domestic mails and do so little and pay so little for our foreign mails? What is the difference? Why have they given so much to railways—too much—in money, $100,000,000; in land, 200,000,000 acres? And why do they refuse to give anything to steamships? What is the difference? And why do they encourage us to pay for carrying our mails on the land and along the coast more than the service returns, and exhibit horror when we suggest that they expend in the development of our foreign commerce scarcely half the money which our foreign mails have paid into the Treasury? We ask you to give $800,000 to encourage this great interest and you refuse, although you collect over $1,600,000 in ocean postage. Shall we encourage home trade and frown upon foreign commerce?

Mr. Speaker, I want again to refer to the action of the Senate, not to abuse the courtesy of the gentleman from Georgia, who waived the point of order, but to recall a remark which the Record officially recorded and the newspapers reported. A Senator had the courage to state the whole truth in this matter. He said his only regret in voting for this amendment was that the amount appropriated was too small. That Senator was the Senator from Georgia; and I say now, not in taunt of the gentleman from Georgia, whose sincerity I greatly honor, but in kindness for him—if what we hear of his

great State is true; if it is growing in wealth, population, intelligence, and energy, the sentiments of her Senator are likely to be sentiments which his own people will approve and reward.

PRESENTING THE STATUES OF STOCKTON AND KEARNY TO CONGRESS BY THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY

[Mr. Phelps was selected to make a presentation address August 21, 1888, in which he said:]

In response to the invitation of 1864, New Jersey to-day tenders to Congress the statues of Richard Stockton and Philip Kearny. They are two of her citizens who are illustrious for their historic renown, which was acquired by the one in the civil service and by the other in the military service of his country. As you may imagine, she looked long at the line of heroes that have illustrated her history before she could call out from it the fortunate two who shall for all time represent the Commonwealth of New Jersey at the Capitol. She had essayed in vain to make the selection had she not determined to choose a statesman and a soldier, a citizen of the distant past and a citizen almost of the immediate present, that these marble figures might tell at the first glance that the sons of New Jersey at all periods and in all callings had but one supreme motive—the welfare of their country. Richard Stockton, the statesman, was born at Princeton in 1730, of the earliest and best New Jersey lineage. He received the best of academic and collegiate educations; he pursued the profession of the law and became the head of the New Jersey bar. For personal improvement he spent two years in Great Britain and received there the distinguished attention his disposition and talents entitled him to. He was presented to the King in London and consulted there with Rockingham, Chatham, and other good friends of his distant home. Edinburgh gave him the freedom of the city, and in Dublin he gave the Irish that sympathy his countrymen at this distant day still feel for that unfortunate island. Upon his return in 1768, he was appointed a member of the King's council, and six years after-

wards one of the judges of His Majesty's supreme court. In June, 1776, he was elected by the provincial congress of New Jersey to be one of its representatives in the General Congress then sitting at Philadelphia. As such representative he signed the Declaration of Independence. In September the Legislature, in selecting a governor, divided its suffrages between him and William Livingston. Upon Stockton's withdrawal from that contest, he was elected a few months afterwards chief-justice. Before assuming these duties he visited the Congressional army as one of a Congressional committee on investigation intrusted with extraordinary powers, which were wisely used. Returning to his home to superintend the removal of his family, whose safety was threatened by the approach of the British army, he was himself captured. He was imprisoned in Amboy and New York under circumstances of such cruelty that his health was lost. After his release, which was made the concernment of General Washington by a special resolution of Congress, he retired to the ruins of his home at Princeton a broken man, and died there aged fifty years.

Philip Kearny, the soldier, was born in New York in 1814. He received a fair education, and when of age entered the army as a second lieutenant of dragoons. He fought on the frontier with the Indians; he was sent to Europe to report on French tactics, and fought the Algerines so well as to win the decoration of the Legion of Honor. Returning, he went to the Mexican war; he was made captain in 1846 for gallantry at Contreras and Churubusco; he was brevetted major. He pursued the flying enemy into the City of Mexico, and was the first to enter its gates. In accomplishing his escape he lost his left arm. Afterwards he rendered service in California, and is entitled to a large share of the credit of adding that territory to our national domain. He went to Europe, continued his studies, and served in the Italian war in 1859. When the Civil War broke out he came back, and May 17, 1861, took command of a New Jersey brigade. His promotion was rapid, won by gallantry in many a familiar field—Williamsburgh, Fair Oaks, Centreville. He was a major-general at Warrenton Junction. At Chantilly, telling orderly and aids to keep back, he rode forward himself to see the position

and was killed September 1, 1862, only forty-eight years old.

Could two characters have been more different, or two careers? Contemplation and action. Peace and war. Stockton was the model of a statesman; fond of study and contemplation; a man fitted at every point for the duties of peaceful society. Kearny was the model of a soldier, fond of excitement and action, a man fitted at every point for the stern duties of war. Their supreme devotion to patriotic duty was the only trait in common. They were two most dissimilar types of character, and their grouping in equal honor on this occasion teaches us another lesson that an earnest purpose and not a special temperament is all that is necessary to make a man some way useful to his fellow-men. The Quaker blood in Stockton gave him that moderation which philosophy says is the one essential of statesmanship. The Irish blood in Kearny kindled in him that ardor which gives the courage to despise obstacles and to anticipate success, qualities which are indispensable to military leadership. Stockton did everything after mature consideration, upon a judgment carefully instructed by study and experience. He was the great lawyer, the wise counsellor, the prudent statesman; he did not lack in courage, physical or moral. He wounded and fought off a robber who assaulted him in the streets of London, and met the physical privations of his capture without a murmur.

Nor did he hesitate longer than to convince his judgment, before he declared his independence of a sovereign who had shown him personal courtesy and given him public office and honor. But, for all that, he was a natural conservative, who preferred to run no risks, but to stand by all precedents where honor would permit it. He had a love for a complete decorum in all relations, which made him as careful with the mint and anise and cumin as in the weightier matters of the law. As farmer, lawyer, judge, member of Congress, son, husband, father, and friend, he was a model. The well-rounded symmetry of his character always reminded me of Washington, whose friendship he enjoyed. Except that Stockton's life and character had no military tinge, there was a striking resemblance between these two men. They were

both perfect gentlemen of the antique world: courteous, dignified, methodical, never forgetting themselves, and in justice let me say, never forgetting any one else whom they ought to remember. Just as I can picture Washington at Mount Vernon, I can picture this New Jersey gentleman sitting on the broad acres of Princeton which his grandfather had acquired in the seventeenth century. I can believe he had no greater pride than in recalling his stainless and distinguished line of ancestry, unless Providence had kindly lifted for him the veil of the future that he might behold his son, his grandson, and his great-grandson occupying seats in the Senate by their merits as regularly and as surely as if they were a Stockton heirloom.

How different from this picture is the active life and restless genius of Phil Kearny! He cared nothing for details; he ignored them all that he might concentrate all his energies upon the great principle for which he strove. Toward that object he rolled in molten stream his past, his present, his future, his memories and hopes, his courage and his parts, all that there was in him. Such enthusiasm could not wait for the slow processes of reason. He appealed often to instinct, knowing that he was a child of genius and that genius was kind to her children. The appeal was often not in vain, and then Indian and Mexican and Algerine and Italian and Confederate looked upon him in his rapid strategy and magnificent charge as an inspired madman; and yet when, unwilling to trust to these dangerous gifts, he appealed to the ordinary processes of mankind, he would show the power to plan and organize, which is the basis of the most solid military character. His intensity of nature, however, generally controlled him and brought with it all its natural advantages and disadvantages. He could see only the object at which he aimed, and in pursuit of that object he would ride roughshod over anything in his way—not from indifference, not from unkindness, but his look was focussed on the distant object, and it could not be changed. Had this fierce enthusiasm, this concentration of fiery genius been for an unworthy object, it would have been inexcusable and baneful. Fortunately it was almost always directed to a noble and unselfish end, and those over whom

he rode healed their wounds and forgave him, knowing that he was riding desperately at a common enemy. Brave as a lion, tender as a woman, his portrait remains the beau ideal of a soldier, and the picture of that slim, handsome figure riding all alone to its death at Chantilly, with his bridle in his teeth and his only remaining arm waving his sword, goes down to history as symbolic of the character and conduct of this gallant leader, the Murat of our volunteer army. Soldier and statesman, hail! farewell! May our country never lack the unselfish wisdom in her later councils which Richard Stockton gave in her earliest, and may she never lack in the execution of them the self-devotion which made Philip Kearny, for his country's sake, ride to death as to a festival!

SPEECH OF MR. PHELPS BEFORE THE NEW JERSEY STATE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE, FEBRUARY 5, 1884

As we are to spend an hour together let us, at the start, come to an understanding.

I claim no superior knowledge of agriculture derived from the study of it as a science, or the practice of it as an art. Perhaps, when I consider that I address the State Board of Agriculture, whose members have, in many cases, made the interests of the soil their business, I can without undue humility assume that I know less than they do about everything except the special topic to which I have given some study, and of which I shall speak to-night.

And yet I would not have my disclaimer so sternly construed as to find that I had excluded myself from the guild of farmers. I cannot recall the time when I did not own a piece of land which was tilled, always with pride, though not always with profit. I have gathered from reading and the traditions of a Puritan ancestry the conviction that every citizen of a republic who deserved well of it, should, even at a sacrifice, supplement his other activities, however pressing and numerous, with a little agriculture. I believed, in brief, that if it were a sweet and honorable thing to die for one's country, so it was to farm for it, and I have acted accordingly. The

reasons of the ancients, when they made this practice one of the tests of republican character, still live. Agriculture is still the basis of national wealth and prosperity; still the prizes it offers are less brilliant and attractive than those which other pursuits offer to the ambitious and capable. A duty still calls upon the patriotic citizen, who succeeds in the forum, the market, or the field, to use some of the resources he has won there, in fostering agriculture. Even more than to others does this duty appeal to the successful American, for his Government is singularly indifferent. Where France spent last year $20,000,000, Russia $15,000,000, little Sweden $500,000, the United States spent only $174,686 in helping an industry in which 7,710,000 out of its 17,400,000 workers find their livelihood. Nor are Americans all deaf to the appeal. Let Roman agriculture boast of contributions from poets like Horace, orators like Cicero, soldiers like Cæsar; Roslyn and Marshfield and Windsor and "The St. Louis Farm" show that the American poets, orators, and lawyers find consideration for the money they spent at the model farm in the delights of country life, and in the consciousness of patriotic contribution to a great and neglected industry.

Not presuming to class myself with men like Bryant, and Webster, and Evarts, and Grant, whose devotion adds lustre and dignity to farm life, I may yet congratulate myself and you that a similar taste and experience do me this service; I shall not repeat the old story. I shall take something for granted, and assume that the common doctrines of agriculture are known and accepted by you.

If, then, at the threshold I touch some of them by simple allusion, it is as the Apostles' Creed is recited in the churches, not to teach but to remind. They are the farmers' creed, which no well-regulated farmers' meeting should be without.

FENCES, TREES, AND WISE ECONOMY

I believe in removing the fences which cut and slash the face of our fair Jersey landscape like an ill-kept razor. The wood and stone with which our ancestors laboriously shut up broad acres which had no intention to get out served no

purpose outside of the pasture lot, except to occupy useful soil, spoil the view, and drain the pocket. Fences cost us twenty millions at the start; they take at least five per cent. on this cost to keep them in repair. This is $1,000,000. They take six per cent. on this cost to pay the interest. This is $1,200,000, so that they cost us annually $2,200,000—mostly waste. The fences must go.

We believe in making good roads and in spending money judiciously but liberally to keep them so. This is sound policy for farmers everywhere. It saves the team, the wear and tear of the wagon, and aids not only in transportation, but in the other operations of the farm, in nearly all of which transportation is an important factor. But the good road is especially important to our fortunes as Jersey farmers. We have a right to consider among the probable gains of our future the probability of great and rapid increase in the value of our land. Young men and old, weary of city life, in all seasons of the year, spend their holidays in exploring our State; they swarm upon our hill-tops and straggle into our deep valleys, intelligent and thoughtful explorers. The first thing they notice is the highways. How can they help it? It is the path by which they come. It is the last thing they notice. How can they help it? It is the path by which they return. The condition of that highway will generally fix their choice to purchase or seek elsewhere. Business necessity for them demands that access shall be easy; and that impatience for freedom, which drives them from the crowd and block of the city streets, finds rest only in the smooth and open road which invites and assures unchecked activity. We must spend money on our roads as the surest way of increasing the market value of our land. Bad roads must go.

Nor need we pause because the amount is small—perhaps limited to the meagre sum that the district has for a century expended each year on what it calls "keeping them up"—only we must change the fashion of the expenditure. We will not "keep up" the roads; we will not plough and scrape to the middle of the road the same dirt which nature will more slowly, but certainly, wash back to the sides. Let such improvement cease, and let us expend the appropriation in

making one piece of complete and permanent roadway. The condition of the whole road district would not under this neglect be much worse, while the condition of that section would be much better. The people among whom I live have adopted this modern practice after many wasted years, and, as a result, Englewood already boasts miles of park drives which are an asset adding immensely to the value of the township.

We believe in trees. Plant them on the roadside, and cherish the scattered specimen that an irrepressible nature has managed under all obstacles to keep in our fields. They stand for comfort and beauty. Save your forests and use them as a perpetual wood and lumber yard. You do not kill your cow, you keep her to milk; why kill your forest? You keep it not for lumber and wood only. The forests stand, too, for a wider utility as having influence for good on the climate, rainfall, and the watercourse.

And finally, we believe in the intelligent economy that the close trade of farming demands. This economy would paint the buildings, house the cattle, fill the tool shop, enrich the soil, and educate the children—not as scholars, but as intelligent farming men and women. And all of us believe nothing should tempt these intelligent men and women to run into debt unless it were for manure. We could make this creed much longer. But this is long enough, if practised, to make our land worth as much as that in the island of Jersey. That is worth £100 per acre; and many an acre, in our State, would under similar tillage be worth as much, for it would return an income on that valuation. This is a claim I would not dare to make for any other State in the Union, and in making it I am brought directly to the subject of this evening's discussion—the superior advantages the State of New Jersey offers the agriculturist. For some time I have thought that our State offered him better prospects for comfort and wealth than any other. I grew to think so by watching the general drift of facts and talk and public opinion, not blind to the wonderful resources of the West, but forced everywhere to recognize the wonderful and peculiar resources of New Jersey. The examination of better—because more definite—information for the purpose of this address, has confirmed this opinion,

and I am tempted to say "That which I thought, now I know." Mindful of the extent and intricacy involved in such a comparison, I will not assume infallibility. But I feel sure enough of the results to assume the responsibility of changing the counsel of the past, and I say "Young man, *don't* go West, but stay East!" Will you review with me the comparison which I have made. First, let us state fairly the advantages of the Western States.

WESTERN ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

The land is cheap. True; although, if the land is good and fairly situated, not so cheap as it used to be. There is a demand nowadays at a fair price for all good Western lands.

The land is fertile, easily tilled, and needs no manure. True, too; and here is, perhaps, the chief advantage to which the West for the last twenty years has owed its popularity with the emigrant. The land constantly increases in value; rapidly in some points, but at some rate everywhere. This appreciation insures a return beyond the natural rewards of his labor, and is a bounty to the husbandman.

The Western farmer can introduce a new method without the expense and loss of change from old methods of production and transportation. This is a great advantage. He has no ruts to get out of, no old-fashioned machinery to store, no old apple-trees to root out, no traditions and habits of the neighborhood to impede and harass him. His land is ready, like potter's clay, for him to mould it as he pleases.

Finally—His holdings are so large that he can farm at wholesale and secure the economies of large transactions. The man's arm yields to the horse's leg and to the engine's piston.

Now for his disadvantages. His markets are remote. That implies long transportation and higher rates. Long transportation requires simple and unvaried agriculture. He must confine himself mainly to grain and cattle. These are industries where the profits are chiefly made by the great farmers. Grain and cattle are in that small number of products where the rich and wholesale producer has great advantages. It is

cheaper to raise a million bushels of wheat or a thousand head of cattle than it is to raise a thousand bushels or a hundred head. There is no such difference between the production at wholesale or at retail of eggs and chickens, and fruits and vegetables and flowers, and the thousand varied and pleasant industries which a nearer market and unrestricted choice give to all. Remote markets crush the small farmer. Even the great farmer suffers, because the facilities of transportation must be scant and imperfect. The distant markets can be reached only by a single railway, and his success is marred or made by the corporation that owns it. The problems of transportation to him are always full of anxiety and often of loss. Sometimes the railway is new and lacks sufficient equipment to move the crops. Oftener it is a feeble corporation and cannot work its way into a trunk line. Again, the rate is so high, as to forbid export, or worse yet, the great farmer sees some bonanza farmer, who sends a thousand tons to his hundred tons, receive upon his larger shipment, or perhaps upon his larger investment in the railway stock, special rates of transportation. The Western farmer, great or small, may well envy the man who has his market near and many routes to reach it.

But the gravest objections are those that strike his home. Under its roof he looks for the rewards of his toil. All the rest is a struggle for living, and here he must test the life he has won. It need not be luxurious to make it worth living, but it should be comfortable and should have some intellectual color. A great many homes have the color. But too often it is the home of the pioneer, and dark and empty with the lack and pain of pioneer life; the house rude, often unceiled, without the necessary conveniences, is tasteless inside and out. The economy within is rough and sordid, for few male or female assistants can be found to take the ruder tasks. His table is confined to the products of the farm. Fresh meat is a rarity, and so are fruits, fish, vegetables, and everything that would be a variety to his fare. Nor can he find diversion or compensation outside. There is no refined society for him or his family, no church or school; they have yet to be built. Such life is a struggle for mere existence, and can satisfy

only the foreign emigrant whom tradition and experience have taught to find his chief enjoyment in the discovery of new economies, to prolong it. It is unsatisfactory and odious to the Jerseyman who has known a fuller and better life.

NEW JERSEY AND HER SISTERS

We have spoken of the East and the West. Now let us look at our own State. Our manufactures, with their masses of masonry, their talk of tariffs, and the noise and the struggle of their trades-unions absorb our attention, and we forget that New Jersey is a State of most extensive and successful agriculture. It is small, is counted the forty-third among the States and Territories, nor is grain its great industry, yet in the annual production of wheat New Jersey is twenty-third in the list, with a crop of nearly 2,000,000 of bushels. In the annual production of oats it is twentieth, in the list, with a production of nearly 4,000,000 of bushels. And, generally, we may claim that in these simplest forms of agriculture our position is above the average, and in agricultural and horticultural specialties our position is the first. But even after this statement you will wonder at the details. Look at the percentage which the annual products of the farm bear to the capital invested in two of our counties—one about the worst, the other about the best for such a comparison. In Bergen County the value of the products is ten per cent. This county lies opposite to New York, and the interest is moderate because, in many cases, the farming acre has to bear the assessment of a villa lot, and many villa lots which produce nothing are counted as farming acres. But in Burlington County, which crosses our State like a zone, and whose character is agricultural and not suburban, it is twenty per cent. This is not a bad result in either county. But our object is to compare our State with other States in all particulars which would decide its relative grade as a farming State. We will take the land itself first. What is the value of the farming acre in New Jersey and the value of the farming acre in the United States? The answer shows the value of the land without tools, or machinery, or crop, or stock. As we look through the tables we pause a

moment to notice the preponderance of the industry which your association helps to foster.

The farms of the United States are worth 10,197 millions, while all other real estate, including the dwelling and warehouses of the city, the capital employed in business and the water power besides, is but 9,881 millions; railroads and their equipment are worth but 5,536 millions; and mines, including petroleum wells and gold and silver bonanzas and stone and other quarries, are worth but 780 millions. To the ten thousand millions invested in farming lands New Jersey contributes the most valuable land, for while the average acre of the United States is worth but $19.02, the New Jersey acre is worth $65.15. If, having ascertained the value of our acre, we look to see the average value of what it produces in the different States we find that in 1879 it was:

The United States	$7.77
Connecticut	10.97
Illinois	7.81
Indiana	8.24
Massachusetts	11.34
Ohio	8.66
New Jersey	14.14

In 1869 the value of all produce was exceptionally high. In that year New Jersey maintained its supremacy and showed $21.61 as the value that was raised on each of her cultivated acres.

In 1879 each acre, sown with seed of corn, wheat, or oats, produced in the

	United States	In New Jersey
Corn	24.6	28.9
Wheat	13.6	13.6
Oats	26.14	29.2

Or, if we look at the value of the live stock, we find this result:

	United States	New Jersey
Horses	$20.59	$99.48
Mules	79.49	117.65
Milch cows	30.21	39.63
Sheep	2.53	4.44
Swine	6.75	12.75

Let us next see where the farming folk are the richest. Each person engaged in farming is worth in the

United States	$1,578
Connecticut	3,070
Illinois	2,688
Indiana	2,195
Massachusetts	2,529
Ohio	3,496
New Jersey	3,591

But let us look to see where labor engaged in farming gets the largest return. Each person engaged in this work earned in the year 1879 in the

United States	$314.63
Connecticut	409.08
Illinois	467.51
Indiana	346.30
Massachusetts	371.46
Ohio	394.41
New Jersey	500.00

This rapid survey of results is startling. It places New Jersey at the van among agricultural States. In all particulars her record places her above the average, and in most, at the very top. If we look at the land which is the source from which agriculture draws all its wealth, we find that an acre in New Jersey is worth more than an acre in any other State. If we look at what this acre produces, we find that it produces more bushels of grain than the average, and more of the products of a varied agriculture than any other acre, for the outcome of the Jersey acre sells for more. If we look at the Jerseyman who gets such results from the Jersey acre, we find that he has more capital than any other farmer, and that he ought to have, because each year gives him a larger income than his rival.

These results are very encouraging; nor are they startling when we examine with equal care the peculiar conditions under which this industry is practised. The results which these statistics reveal come logically from advantages which New Jersey possesses over all other States, and which we will now summarize.

SPECIAL ADVANTAGES OF NEW JERSEY

New Jersey, by her fortunate position, combines advantages which are peculiar to the Eastern and to the Western States. In our summary of the inducements which the West offers to the Eastern farmer, we mentioned the facts that Western land was cheap; that it was increasing in value; and that it was easy of tillage. In all these three, our old Eastern State competes with her new Western sisters. If you speak of cheap land, I think I am correct in claiming that land can yet be bought in the southern part of New Jersey for $10 per acre, not more than four hours from the great cities of Philadelphia and New York, and that within two hours of either of these markets good farming land, which has been tilled for two centuries, may be bought for $100 per acre. The southern and cheaper acre at the touch of marl yields large crops, and the northern acre at the touch of ordinary manures —which neighboring villages and towns offer at moderate cost —blooms prolific as the plains of Lombardy. The farmer who wants cheap land need not go West. We spoke of the regular and rapid increase in the values of Western lands, and thought this element played, probably, the largest part in the Western farmer's gains. Railways come, and a village grows upon his prairie; then came a town, then a city. This, of course, was an exceptional, but by no means an extraordinary fortune. It is not an exceptional but a natural result that this prairie, even if it misses the advent of a town, shall regularly increase in market value; for the State of which it is a part swells rapidly and regularly with wealth and population. This increase in value, ordinary or exceptional, no Eastern State can claim, except New Jersey. It comes from her position. Lying between two great cities, and traversed by innumerable railways that connect all parts of her domain with them, the overflow of their populations makes a constant and healthy growth. No other State of the Eastern or Middle groups grew in population as did New Jersey during the last two decades. In this regard it stood with the Western States, and was compared with them. To this rapid increase of population it owes the regular and ordinary increase in the value of its

acreage. But it has also cases of exceptional and extraordinary appreciation, numerous and dazzling as any found in the history of Western development. A peculiar charm of surroundings; a quiet lake; a forest of pine trees; a successful factory on a little stream; or the mere whim of a wealthy speculator whose eye has caught a pretty view as he is whirled from the Exchange in Broad Street to the Exchange in Third Street, is often all that is necessary to wave, as with a wand, a village or a town into being. Cases are not infrequent where in less than two years the village lot has sold for the same money which bought the farming acre from which it is cut. A prudent farmer should not rely upon, or anticipate such extraordinary increase, but he has a right to expect and rely upon regular increase, which is derived from regular causes, and to count it a proper and certain element in estimating the results of his work. And as he cannot shut his eyes to the extraordinary advances which come by frequent accident in his neighborhood, his own chances in that direction figure in the ambitious dreams which fill his moments of leisure.

NEAR MARKETS

Easy as the Western prairie is to till where the ploughshare and cultivator's tooth moved without let or hindrance, we find equal facility of tillage in our Jersey land. The fertile land of the northern half, originally rough and stony, has been worked by so many generations that it lies now without stump or stone, a mass of mellow land ready for garden culture; and nature made the sandy loam of the southern half equally mellow, and it lies as ready to receive marl as the dough of the cook to receive yeast. These are the advantages New Jersey has in common with her Western sisters. She has in common with her Eastern sisters, but to a greater extent, the neighborhood of great markets. On the wrong side of the Hudson, and of the Delaware, are cities where, in one case, two millions, and in the other one million of human beings stand waiting to receive their food; and on the right side of these rivers, within the borders of this fortunate little commonwealth, are cities of a hundred thousand like Newark, of fifty

thousand like Paterson and Camden, of twenty thousand like Trenton, Elizabeth, New Brunswick, into whose morning streets are wheeled from the neighboring farms the food for thousands of human beings. The neighborhood of such markets may be of little value to the great farmer who fills his trains with wheat and sends them to the seaboard for foreign export, but to the small farmer of varied industries who raises flowers, and fruits, and vegetables, and poultry, the value is incalculable. In this matter of transportation New Jersey has extraordinary advantages. Few spots in the State are without two railway communications, many have more, and some of the best farming centres are in such propinquity to the great cities, that in case of any unjust discrimination they could, with a slight increase of cost, transport their own products. To the neighborhood of these great cities the Jersey farmer owes to a great extent the superiority of his home in all that adds to the comfort and happiness of its inmates. The city, its libraries, its galleries, its daytime amusements, are within the reach of all, and half of the population of New Jersey, without extraordinary hardship, can participate in those evening entertainments which are the peculiar attraction of city life. Constant intercourse with city friends gives that variety of interest and thought which keeps the country mind from stagnation.

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PRESENT DISCOURAGEMENTS

It is a discouragement to the casual observer that the rural population diminishes. A moment's thought would show that this does not indicate, of necessity, diminished production. Machinery now does the work of many men who are released and can seek different employments in the towns. The industries connected with the farm—spinning, weaving, wagon and tool making is no more done at the cross-roads, but in the villages and towns which a protective tariff has built in the neighborhood. Not an unmixed evil, for while these towns are of great value in furnishing the market they furnish great temptation, especially when they grow into cities on a hill, to attract the ambitious youth. The superior luxury, the

excitement, the amusements for the evening, and most of all the stories of the great millionaires whose millions vie with those of kings, give an unhealthy stimulus to his imagination. They know that these pleasures are, and they think that such gigantic success is within the reach of all, forgetting that in a population of fifty millions under circumstances of rapid national development which may never occur again, these favorites of fortune can be counted on a single hand.

FEWER FARMERS, GREATER PROFITS

This reduction in the number of farmers, so far from being a loss to the agriculturist, is a gain, if the population otherwise employed increases as it does in New Jersey. Indeed, the reason why our Jersey land is worth so much, and the income derived from it is so large, lies in the paradoxical fact that there are so few farmers in the State. One would naturally suppose that the more farmers there were the greater would be the demand for farms and the greater would be their value. But investigation shows that the reverse is the case. For when there are many farmers in proportion to the number of those not engaged in that industry the farmers compete with each other, and so lower the price of their products that the produce of the soil sells for less, and naturally the soil itself. Let us look again at the figures:

	Per cent. of Agricultural Workers	Value of Acre
Massachusetts has	9	$43.52
Connecticut	18	49.34
New York	20	44.41
Pennsylvania	21	49.30
New Jersey	15	65.16
New Hampshire	31	20.38
Illinois	44	31.87
Virginia	51	10.89
Kentucky	62	13.92
Georgia	72	4.30
Mississippi	80	5.86

This table shows clearly that the smaller ratio the farmers bear to the whole population the greater is the value of their farms. Massachusetts has only 9 per cent. of its popluation

at work on the farm and its land is worth $43.52 per acre. Then as we pass down the column we see the value of the land diminishing with fair regularity, just as the relative number of those engaged in farming increases, until we strike Mississippi. Here 80 per cent. of the population are farmers, on land worth only $5.86 per acre.

In this table New Jersey's ratio is fifteen per cent. of agriculturists. As we know, its land is worth the most of any State—$65.16. This would seem to be a break in the uniformity of the rule. But the proportion of the population of the adjacent cities fed by New Jersey ought, for the purposes of this examination, to be considered as within her jurisdiction, and would reduce the rate from fifteen per cent. to possibly six or seven per cent. There would seem to be no doubt, in view of these figures, of the great principle that the value of agricultural land increases with the increase of the non-agricultural part of the population. Fertility of soil, position of markets, mines, and other resources may affect particular areas, but the general principle is assured. We shall find the same laws governing, if we look at the value of the products of the land as represented by what each farmer earns, and compare it with the ratio of the agricultural to the ratio of the non-agricultural population.

THE BENEFITS OF PROTECTION

Here you meet one advantage of the system of protection: it increases the number of those who leave the ranks of agriculture and engage in other pursuits. How the encouragement which this system gives to manufactures and other branches of home industries tends to this result, may be best seen by taking an area of country as it would be early in its settlement, and then noticing its transformation under this economic application. The land will be found at first filled with farmers and no others. These will all be engaged in the production of the larger crops. They are raising corn and cotton. They have no market except that which they find by export. They send their grain and cotton to Liverpool. To get the corn there costs a dollar, and the corn which they sell

at their station for 25 cents a bushel brings $1.25 in Liverpool. It adds 20 per cent. to the price which they receive to put their cotton in the same market. The Englishmen consume the corn and manufacture the cotton at these increased prices. Then they send their calico back to the American farmer, and in buying it he buys back his corn and his cotton at this increased value and pays in addition the wages and other expenses of manufacture, of transportation and insurance. Some one among their number, wise enough to recognize that the struggle to live under such conditions is going against them, recognizes also the value of the protection which the tariff offers to all who will manufacture calico within the United States, and starts his little factory. The calico manufactured in this little building is made of corn that costs 25 cents and of cotton 20 per cent. less than in England. No money has been spent for transportation; and the money spent for wages and insurance has been spent at home. That little mill was the beginning of a new era for the neighborhood. Other industries followed after this. Now, the weak who cannot work outdoors get employment indoors; and those who are skilful, but not strong, use their skill. Labor and skill are put to the best uses. Meanwhile, the farmer finds a larger market for the simpler productions, the grain and the cattle, with which he began his work; but finds a greater advantage in a market which can consume fruits, poultry, vegetables, etc., so that he can now start upon that varied production which is the surest source of agricultural wealth. And the variety of industries here inaugurated,—for with the mill, come the grocery and other trades—tends to produce that balance between the consumption and distribution and production which is the surest pledge of the State's growth and prosperity. An objection urged to this view is that at the beginning, at least, the foreign article of manufacture can be sold cheaper than the native, and the foreign manufacturer is willing to take the corn, and the cotton, and the wool in exchange. True, but the foreign manufacturer cannot take the egg, the chicken, the vegetable, the hay, or the potatoes; nor can he aid to build schools and churches, and to pay the taxes. These are all left to the farmers themselves. Besides the farmer knows that

the foreign article will not long be cheaper. He has found this out in a hundred cases. The superior quickness of the American artisan, the superior ingenuity of the American mind in devising labor-saving inventions almost invariably brings such a result. He looks around him and sees that already nearly everything made at home, that he uses, is cheaper than in England. Cotton fabrics, the articles most generally used for all purposes in the American farmhouse, are cheaper. American cottons are found on the shelves of the English shopkeeper. Boots and shoes are cheaper, and the English already import some of ours. Our forks are cheaper and the English buy them, as they do our axes and our reapers. The American farmer would lose if he had to buy any English tools or implements. He can buy here wagons, carts, and carriages cheaper than in England. Furniture is not a small item in the well-kept house of the American farmer, and our furniture is at least ten per cent. cheaper. So are clocks and watches, tinware, woodenware, and the common glass used by the plainer housewife—all these are cheaper. Every manufactured article is cheaper to-day in the United States than it was thirty years ago. Then ninety per cent. were made abroad, now less than ten per cent. The farmer may well follow the lead of such experience.

THE FARMER'S DIRECT AND INDIRECT PROTECTION

It is so common for the friends of free trade to assume that the tariff is for the protection of the manufacturer only, and then to inquire with an air of indignant pity of the neglected farmer "why do you submit?" that at the risk of wearying you I must insist on reading the list of agricultural productions which are protected against importation from Canada and elsewhere. The great staples of the North and South—wool and sugar—are, and have been, always protected. Besides on these, the present tariff laws impose the following direct protective duties on agricultural products: Rice, cleaned, 2½ cents a pound; wheat, 20 cents per bushel; Indian corn, 10 cents per bushel; oats, 10 cents per bushel; rye, 15 cents per bushel; barley, 15 cents per bushel; butter, 4 cents per pound;

cheese, 4 cents per pound; potatoes, 15 cents per bushel; poultry, 10 per cent. in value; peas, from 10 to 20 per cent.; beans, from 10 to 20 per cent.; tobacco, unmanufactured, 35 cents per pound! unstemmed, 50 cents, in addition to a revenue duty of 24 cents per pound; on horses, cows, bulls, oxen, steers, calves, sheep, lambs, goats, hogs, and pigs, except for breeding purposes, 20 per cent.; those for breeding purposes are admitted free to benefit the farmers; beef and pork one cent per pound; mutton, 10 per cent., and hay, 20 per cent.

This is the direct protection the farmer gets by the American system.

But the indirect is much more valuable. By fostering other industries, giving opportunities and inducements for folks willing to labor, to go into other avocations, it diminishes the number of farmers, increases the population non-agricultural, and by diminishing the number of the farmer's competitors, increases his gains. By causing the growth of villages, towns, and cities, it gives him a home market. In our home market, remember, we are now selling ninety-two per cent. of our production. This shows its importance. But free traders say: "It would be better to diminish this large percentage of home sales and increase the percentage of foreign." I don't think so. And these are my reasons: The home market is the only place where you can sell perishable products—and perishable products include nearly everything raised in varied agriculture, and varied agriculture gives the largest return for the individual and the surest support for the many. Varied agriculture—what we raise near the house and in the garden, flowers, berries, fruits, vegetables, poultry—is what makes the profit of the smaller farm; and the smaller farm is what makes the safety and the true grandeur of our country.

THE FOREIGN MARKET LIMITED

And another reason is, that the foreign market is limited and can be supplied elsewhere. The quantity of grain that Britain needs is very nearly a fixed quantity. She takes this from us, if we sell it cheaper; if not, from Germany, or Rus-

sia, or Turkey. But were we always able and willing to undersell our rivals; in the English market the demand is uncertain, and its uncertainty is always against us. It is certain that the English demand won't be above the usual figure, but it is not certain that it won't be below. The demand will vary with the excellence of their harvests. What we have said does not apply to cotton and tobacco. There is for these just such a demand as there is for the articles of manufacture.

And for these the demand is practically unlimited. It rises and falls with the wealth and taste of the community that uses them. Nearly all manufactured articles are, like a few agricultural products, in some sense, a luxury. They certainly are, except in a moderate use, luxuries. Take the fabrics with which we cover our bodies: from these the humble housewife takes two dresses; the Newport belle, perhaps, fifty. The two dresses are a necessity; very many of the fifty are a luxury.

Take sugar. Life can be, and is often, supported without any. The poor man will use a little for his tea and coffee, but the pastry-cook and the confectioner use large quantities to tickle the palate of a rich man's child. But wheat, and corn, and potatoes, and much that the farmer raises are necessities, and not luxuries, and the consumption is practically limited. Whether rich or poor you will eat the same amount of bread, but if you are rich you will have more furniture, more clothes, more carriages, more wares and merchandise.

THE HOME MARKET THE BEST

I enlarge on this well-known rule of consumption because I want strongly to impress upon the farmer a reason why the foreign market is worth so little to him, less even than to the manufacturer. In view of the continent which we hold and the swelling millions that are tiding into it, and the varying wants of the different zones that girt it, I think lightly of the foreign market even for the manufacturer; much less do I esteem it for our craft. It is the home market where American manufacturers and farmers find their profits; they should labor with at least equal zeal to protect and keep it. Originally

all Americans did, for they were nearly all farmers, and Southern statesmen agreed with Northern that neither material prosperity could be secured nor political independence maintained unless we fostered our manufacturers and provided opportunities for varied industry to our people. How came the broad line, which so soon separated the policy of the South from the policy of the North? Like all political changes—from a discovery that their interests were different and put them on opposite sides of it. The South wanted manufactures, but it wanted another thing more—it wanted to keep its laborer ignorant and poor. If it kept its laborer ignorant and poor he could attain neither the skill of the handicraftsman nor the genius of the inventor. There was no such handicap on the Northern laborer, and under the stimulus of manufacture his fingers grew skilful, and his mind fertile and inventive. Southern statesmen quickly saw their mistake, receded from their position, and began, and have continued, to oppose a protective system, the provisions of which gave to the North a prosperity which the South could only, at the cost of the abolition of slavery, participate in. They preferred to lose the home market and keep the foreign, rather than to educate the slave. But for their staples, fortunately for them, the foreign market was better than for ours. Their staples were such that the world offered no real competition, and such, too, that the demand for them was unlimited. Their staples were cotton and tobacco. Both are luxuries, so that the world could always increase the use of them as they increased their capacity to buy them. Both staples, in those antebellum times, before high prices stimulated the production in Egypt and India, monopolized the markets of the world. So long as the fertility of the soil refused to yield to the unceasing draughts of these constant and greedy crops, the Southern planters really were in an enviable position of commercial independence; they could smile at the rest of the world and disdain all political or economic safeguards and aids. That our view is correct; that the narrow view of their own interests made the Southern people leave the camp of the protectionists, is made still clearer by the exception. Louisiana raised sugar principally. Sugar had competition. It could be raised

cheaper elsewhere. The Louisiana planter needed protection, and, caring more for his only crop than for his negro, insisted upon protection, and always on that account voted the Whig ticket. In the middle of the great broad avenue that divides the old part of New Orleans from the new, stands in bronze the famous statue of Henry Clay, erected in grateful recognition of his services in protecting that, with other American industries.

FOOLISH FREE-TRADE OBJECTIONS

To such practical results as these, what say the friends of free trade? They rush to hide themselves in the misty regions of glittering generalities. Here they are hard to catch, because their theories are too impalpable to take the practical and formulated shape of propositions. The best one can do, who seeks to compress this thin air into something which can stand long enough and firm enough to bear an assault, is to say that the friends of free trade claim that the system of protection is unnatural; that it destroys foreign trade which they call commerce; that it stimulates home growth and protection to an extent which causes disaster to those engaged in the business. The first objection is, that protection interferes with the natural laws of trade. Our answer is, that it interferes with the unnatural laws of trade. Older countries, for generations, by legislative provisions and money subsidy, have forced trade into channels that conduct it all to their warehouses. These efforts have gotten trade to flow so easily into these well-worn channels that they need no longer to force it, and as they stand on the banks of their canal and watch the enriching tide, they exclaim: "This is the natural flow of these precious waters."

Now when our American friends seek to divert any of it they cry, "It is a crime against nature!" To drop all figures Great Britain by every contrivance, just and unjust, stimulated manufactures until they were well established, the capital in them and back of them was so large, and asked so little interest, the laborers are so skilful, so many, and so ill-paid that she could withdraw all supervision and let them take care of

themselves. And because they now take care of themselves she says her trade is natural. But when we proceed to get our manufactures by the same methods into the same condition, so that we, too, may leave it to natural laws, the Cobden Club speaks ill both of our head and our heart.

Their second objection is that protection destroys foreign trade, which they call commerce. I meet this squarely. It does not destroy it, but it looks first to the interests of the home trade. We need foreign markets only to take our surplus. Our surplus in agriculture is only eight per cent. of our total production. It does not stand to reason that we should care so much for that market as for the market that takes and consumes ninety-two per cent. Nor is it by any means sure that commerce as now practised is the great enginery to bring wealth to the commercial centres. It used to be, but commerce in olden times was different. The great commercial cities that made the exchanges of the world and did it so profitably that citizens of Tyre, Constantinople, Venice, and Genoa had the incomes of kings, did a different business. They did not sell their own products. They gathered into their hospitable harbors the products of all climes, and there made the exchanges, taking care that the rates of exchange were profitable to the merchant prince. When commerce means the same things for us, that other continents shall send their goods here for distribution, and all consumers shall come here to get them from us, then foreign commerce may ask us to consider her a rival to our domestic industry. It is not now.

The third objection is that it stimulates growth and production, and excessively—so it does. And the few who are carried away by greed or a noble enthusiasm suffer. But these characteristics lead to suffering in any case, and in this case the suffering of the few leads to the gain of the many.

The money made as the new industry is first developed is so much as to excite the cupidity of others. They rush in and glut the market. The weaker fail, but the price of the commodity falls, the people get cheap articles, and the manufacturers who are in excess seek other occupation. So goes on constantly the process of development, distribution, and ad-

justment. We accept this loss to the few who are too greedy and too sanguine, as a natural law, by which the few suffer for the many. Its operation no community can escape. Nature uses it to develop all new industries, to exploit and popularize all discoveries. It is her method to get new machinery into working order, new material into use. When gold is first discovered the profits of mining it are immense. The story of the miner's success fires the imagination. The adventurers of the world seek the mine, and the profits begin to diminish just as soon as enough laborers are gathered there to ensure regular and continued production. From that time the rewards of labor fall to the normal rate. Many who crossed the seas or risked all are ruined, but the mines are open, have become, and will continue to be, a permanent contribution to the world's wealth. So with oil or any other new discovery—so with the electric light. At the start great profits —nature's way to tempt in enough labor and capital to produce and distribute the novelty—and then ordinary profits and a loss to a few who expected fortune in the business, but a gain to the many, to the world of consumers who have secured for ever a cheap commodity. Unless free trade can do better than this free trade must go.

RECAPITULATION

One word of recapitulation and I will relieve your courtesy. We have seen the advantages which our little State offers for the pursuit of agriculture. We have seen that each acre of the farming land is worth more than the land in any other State, and yet that the emigrant can still buy land at ten dollars per acre within four hours, and at one hundred dollars per acre within two hours, of the largest cities on the continent. We have seen that this acre produces as much grain as the average, and in the products of a varied agriculture the most, and that this acre produces the most in money. We have seen that, nor have we failed to recognize the great law, which raises the value of the land and its produce as the farmers decrease and the non-agricultural population increases. And we have seen how favorably this ratio is affected by that protective system which

all Jerseymen, whatever their party affiliations, are sworn to protect. In view of the facts gathered in this rapid survey, we are convinced that our neighbors and our children, who wish to secure the comfort and independence of country life, need not go West, but can stay with us, in the firm assurance that New Jersey offers the best field for agricultural industry. This is a consummation devoutly to be wished for. And if there is disappointment that in telling my story to-night I have touched nothing of sentimental or dramatic interest and have passed by the sensibilities and appealed to the judgment, console yourselves that it is the story of a brave little State, whose present is so prosperous and whose future is so bright that it has the monotony of peace and comfort. Happy the people, who have no annals. Happy the State, where peace and comfort quench all the fires of eloquence.

GRAND ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC

Speech of Mr. Phelps at Mount Holly, N. J., on Memorial Day, May 30, 1886

I come to-day directly from the task of legislating for sixty millions of human beings that I may speak to some of the survivors of that Grand Army, which saved the Republic, in whose councils I am sitting as a representative of the people. I thank you for the invitation which brings me among you, that I may assist you in honoring the memories of the dead, and that I may tender to you, who, tho' battered and worn by past perils, are still living, the grateful salutations of New Jersey. She salutes you in recollection of these services in which you honored yourselves, your country, and especially the staunch old State herself, from whose soil you marched more than twenty-years ago to the battle-field.

THE GRAND ARMY

It is indeed a "Grand Army" to which you belong. Its history is the household story of the North. A volunteer surgeon of the Army organized it in Illinois just twenty years ago. And I have seen it grow from that humble beginning, until

now it counts five thousand posts and calls the roll on three hundred thousand members. How could you expect other than this lusty growth when you recall among its earliest commanders men like Hurlbut, Burnside, Devens, Hartranft, and Logan? Your organization represents all the soldiers and sailors of America, who were true to their country and their flag, and is the only one that opens its doors to every man who stood in our great civil contest. And within these doors soldiers and sailors of all ranks, brave men of every nationality, color, and creed—officers and privates—all stand comrades upon a common level. Its great and hospitable roof covers the country. Wherever you wander, east and west, in the city or village, ranching on the plains, or mining in camp, you still find the veterans of this Grand Army breathing and living the Christian principles of its motto, "Fraternity, Charity, and Loyalty." A fraternity established and proved by all those who offered all they possessed for the common safety; a charity, which watches to protect from want the unfortunate brother and his helpless family; and a loyalty which is to keep alive that ardent patriotism which, like magic, created the Grand Army and sent it to the front.

Alas! Of those who went, how many were brought back by tender hands to the graves which flowers have decorated to-day!

Happy dead! if they see that the old banner waves above them, and they can hear the hymns in which their countrymen praise God that their defenders died not in vain.

THE CITIZEN SOLDIER

You do not expect me to say much of military matters, of which I know so little and you so much; and I shall soon pass on to speak of some of our privileges and duties as American citizens. But standing almost within sight of fields where were fought some of the great battles of the Revolution, and having in mind the splendid record of citizen-soldiers at Trenton, Princeton, and Monmouth, I wish to record my interest and faith in a well-equipped and well-disciplined militia.

We used to laugh at them, at the proud tread, the gold-lace

trimmings, and the resplendent trappings of line, field, and staff in our National Guard. Now the laughter dies at the recollection that these first rushed to the front and saved the capital from rebel hands, and these, returning in other organizations and under other names, stayed at the front until they, the bedizened officers we used to smile at and the holiday soldiers we used to think so little of, became the veterans of every army corps, and, as veterans, bore the hardships of the camp and the march, the perils of the lonely picket, the dangers of battle, and the horrors of prison. These are the traditions of New Jersey's National Guard, and I am glad that she has to-day a State military organization in which we can take pride; and this county has especial reason to do so, for it was under a commander from this county that a battalion of New Jersey's militia took and wore the palm at Yorktown.

As in the past so it shall be in the future. We can trust to our volunteers. The experiences of the war on both sides established that proposition. It was fought by volunteers hastily gathered, and yet no armies were ever marshalled anywhere that were composed of better material. European military critics trained to the old methods sneered at these republican armies at the start, but actual experience demonstrated in a few months' time that the United States could improvise an army of citizens equal to the defence of our country against any military power on the globe, and Europe sneers no more.

I am not belittling the importance of organized strength to the existence of all human government. Organized force is necessary, but you multiply its power manifold by moral conditions. A handful of policemen at Chicago repelled an armed mob of murderous anarchists. Were the policemen with their clubs and revolvers enabled to do this because the anarchists with rifles in their hands and bombs under their coats were cowards? No; it was because the mob knew that behind the little squad of policemen were the moral forces of society. The policemen suggested the militia of the State, and behind them all the resources of the United States.

At Milwaukee a mob of thousands, in a premeditated outbreak, threatened arson, robbery, and murder. It was con-

fronted at the outset by three or four companies of State soldiers directed by a governor who never trifled with a public duty. One volley was given; no other was needed. It quieted that mob, which slunk back to its holes and carried its dead with it.

Cincinnati had a foreign element as large and as dangerous as Chicago and Milwaukee. It, too, first whispered and then roared its threats of mischief; but the Governor of Ohio, who was one of your comrades, was ready to assume responsibility. Though young in years, he was a veteran in the service, and knew what was the value of a State musket loaded with Government powder in the preservation of peace. He did not wait for the outbreak before he called out four regiments of the National Guard, and these guards, while the streets of Chicago and Milwaukee were drenched in blood, looked down upon Cincinnati quiet and peaceful as a Quaker meeting.

And while our citizen soldiery keep the peace at home, they keep off insult and invasion from abroad. Europe does not fear our army, which is little, nor our navy, which is less, but the certainty that a million of men trained to the use of arms in the National Guard would, at a moment's notice, drop the tools of peace and seize the implements of war, did their country give the signal.

NEW JERSEY'S WAR RECORD

But mine shall be the duty to remind you that New Jersey had only 98,806 men liable to do military duty, and that out of these we furnished to the Union army 88,305, 10,000 more than were called for by the Government. And, remember, there were naval and marine enlistments numbering nearly 5000 men besides.

That record of patriotism has not been excelled. And you may be proud that you were a part of it. Shall you ever forget how you left the field, the workshop, the store, and the office to rally around your country's flag? It was a great uprising of the people of the land. And it was one where labor and capital were not antagonistic. Employer and workman, rich and poor, fought for the same object, in the same

army, in the same regiment, in the same company. There was real equality, the rich soldier and the poor one had equal chances of honor, and equal chances of death. There was no better fighting and there was no devotion to the cause more self-sacrificing than that of these men of New Jersey. For that New Jersey is proud of you; for that New Jersey asks you each year on this day to accept her grateful salutations.

PRIDE IN NEW JERSEY

New Jersey is proud of you, soldiers of the Grand Army. And ought you not to be proud of New Jersey? Its past, with the legacies of legal and political achievements in its Dickensons, Southards, Walls, Vrooms, Stocktons, and Frelinghuysens. Its present, with all natural gifts supplemented and augmented by the thrift and skill of man. A land, beautiful to the eye, rich in agricultural resources, and out of whose bowels you may dig iron—all framed by an attractive coast and the shores of lordly rivers, and everywhere crossed by lines of rail and canal, that bear to neighboring markets the products of its soil and its skill. The State has colleges older than the Republic itself. Normal schools, model schools, scientific schools, by which the State insures the education of its children; while a geological survey, an agricultural experiment station, a bureau of vital statistics, and of labor and industries show the jealous care with which we are gathering every item of practical knowledge which can increase the wealth and power of our State. With these natural advantages, so fully and conscientiously improved, who shall dare to paint its future? Its population, gentlemen, has doubled since you went to the war, and what another twenty years will do for it, I dare not predict. Let me hope that we may all live to see it.

THE DANGERS OF PEACE

This is the State in which you live—and these the ennobling conditions of your life. Such privileges suggest corresponding duties. What are they? In a republic, the soldier who

rescued his country in war must, as a citizen, preserve it in peace. Peace has its dangers no less than war, and the soldiers of the Grand Army must be ready to meet them. There is the danger you will neglect your political duties.

ATTEND TO POLITICS

Do not have too much fear of becoming politicians. Every right-minded man, in addition to what he owes to his family and himself, ought to feel that he owes something politically to the community in which he lives. He has n't finished his duties to the community when he has participated in the social enterprises and charities of his locality. He has political work to do for it. He has the duty of a citizen—to educate and give proper direction to public opinion, and to see that the force of public opinion is so directed as to have a practical effect in legislation. Public opinion can get practical effects only through party organizations. He must join and work with one of these. These organizations are not dangerous so long as they remain the agents and instruments of the people—not their masters. And they are useful and necessary. You must be politicians, as were your fathers.

OUR FATHERS WERE POLITICIANS

The men who made and signed the Declaration of Independence, and afterward framed our Constitution, were farmers, doctors, clergymen, and lawyers—men working with brain or hand—and so representatives of the toiling millions for whom our Government is formed—they made politics a study and a duty, and we cannot do better than follow their example. Any other course involves disaster to the public weal.

The citizen who goes about his business and will not concern himself with elections, because it is distasteful, must expect that others will seize the opportunity—others less worthy, who will make politics their trade and get their living out of it. The neglect of the worthy to attend to their political duties defeats our scheme of government. Its founders never anticipated or provided for a contingency where any considerable

portion of our citizens would neglect the duties of nomination and election. Had they foreseen this political sloth or pride, they would have, in all probability, provided for it by a very different kind of government. The voter who neglects his great opportunity deserves very little respect.

NO GROUNDS FOR POLITICAL DISCOURAGEMENT

Again, there is danger that you may accept false and discouraging views of our political present and future; and that you may, worse than all, by your careless words, convey them to others. Discouraging views are false. No Government was ever so honest as this; and this Government was never so honest at any other time as now. The Government for which you fought is growing better every day, not worse. Most of the things that trouble you would disappear, did you take time to examine them.

OUR PUBLIC MEN HONEST

You must not cast aside your faith in the honesty of your public men. The only reason you have to say that public men are degenerating is because your partisan newspaper says so. Let me tell you, from the knowledge your partiality has given me the means of acquiring, your Government, State and National, is not officered and controlled by scoundrels; neither are the political parties simply the instruments of designing, selfish, and unscrupulous demagogues. I grant you that party papers tell a different story; so do stump speakers in October. But that does n't make it so. Papers and party orators have always made this charge, and no wise man believes it. These charges of corruption, extravagance, and incapacity are no more emphatic and extensive now than in the days of Washington Adams, Jefferson, and Jackson. Indeed, the administration of Jackson marked the highest tide of newspaper and oratorical detraction. The merciless assaults upon personal reputation then made have never since been equalled. Although before, even in colonial times, he who read the history in hostile records, read that the motives of the founders of the

Government were narrow partisanship, personal ambition, and greed for the emoluments of official position.

THE SCANDALS OF THE PAST

The jealousy and scandal of these earlier years in our history are shocking. And there was truth in it. At that time all there was of the Government was personal. The great families of Massachusetts, New York, and Virginia, and I am not sure but of New Jersey, were a close corporation, who ran their political machinery with a skill and selfishness not outdone by the bosses of the present day. Their relatives and their adherents obtained most of the lucrative offices, and when there were not enough to go round it was charged that offices were increased for the purpose. There were more rogues in those days; and if they differed from ours I fear it was only that then there was less to steal. And personal grudges were allowed to operate in public places. If the old narratives can be relied upon, John Adams referred to the immortal Washington as "that old wooden-head," and it is recorded that the Father of his Country, who could not tell a lie, spoke of Jefferson after the latter left his Cabinet, as a "most profound hypocrite." Does our especial correspondent at Washington get anything spicier than this nowadays. Hamilton denied, or at least very strongly intimated, that Jefferson's claim to the authorship of the Declaration of Independence was fraudulent; and that pure patriot, John Jay, our first great Chief-Justice, aspersed Hamilton's character behind his back. The peace of Washington's Cabinet was destroyed by the intrigues of Jefferson and Hamilton, rival aspirants for the succession. And the President had to dismiss another member of his Cabinet, Randolph, the Secretary of State, because he tried to extort money from the French Minister. Then followed Adams, who had to break up his Cabinet because three of its members were conspiring not against each other, but against their Chief.

For the first twenty-five years of our existence party feeling was carried to that intensity that Republicans would not let Federal judges try their cases, and Federalists would not take their chances before Republican judges. Nor did it stop in

cabinets and courts—it invaded private life and social circles. Bitter and false as is our criticism to-day of all public men, who are leaders in opposition to us, the criticism made by our fathers was worse.

And as for the merits of the case, I speak advisedly when I say our Government is to-day better and purer than it was then, and our public men in the average are as meritorious. They are, in my opinion, less self-seeking and their honor far more sensitive. And if we have not the intellectual giants of those days, the average of our statesmanship is wiser and higher.

These are the three duties which you must not shirk. If you attend to them, how shadowy are the dangers which threaten our Republic!

THE LABOR MOVEMENT

Does any thoughtful man anticipate permanent injury from the labor question? Under any other system of government there might be. There is none in ours. There is disturbance because a great class is opening, readjusting, and settling a social question; the workingman is seeking to secure a larger share of the profits. He deserves a larger share; and both parties seem willing to give all the legislative aid that is practicable. Think what our form of government has done for the workingmen and how it is exhibited in this struggle. The working class inaugurated it, not under the impulse of want, but of philosophy and reason. Their dissatisfaction did not come because they were poor and suffering. They were never before so rich and comfortable. The National Commissioner of Labor states that only seven and a half per cent. of the working people were idle during the year 1885; and all through it their wages were constantly increasing. The savings banks of the States where mechanical industries are most numerous never had so large an aggregate, nor so large a per-capita deposit, or such a large number of depositors. The industrious and frugal wage-workers—the men who really wanted to work—were never before more prosperous. Then, what reason for the bitterness and intensity of their demand and their effort?

It is because of certain things the workingmen saw, and a certain injustice these things suggested.

LARGE FORTUNES NOT DANGEROUS

One thing they saw was large fortunes held by capitalists and corporations who had paid scant wages and had exacted long hours of labor. They saw, too, that their employers worked few hours and ostentatiously and uselessly spent much. And they felt an injustice when they contrasted it with their case, and determined to seek for themselves a larger share of what their labor produces. They ought to have it. They saw great grants of public lands to railroads; the sale of large areas of soil to combined capitalists of this and other lands. And they felt an injustice that their patrimony was diverted, and determined to stop it. And they are right. Organized labor, keeping within the bounds of the law, with what aid legislation can afford, will settle this social and economical question in due season. The American workingmen are sensible, and do not expect the impossible. They know that under no state of society can all be equally rich and great. They know that our institutions—so far as human institutions can—give all equal chances to acquire wealth and distinction. To those who have achieved success, the workingmen of this country have always been able in the past to contribute their full number. Nor is it less true to-day than it has been at any time in the past that the American who is intelligent, industrious, and persevering will find the road open to him. Why, almost all the employers of to-day are the workingmen of yesterday. Why should the wage-worker of to-day despair of being an employer to-morrow? Never fear; labor will get its rights under the Constitution, and without harming it. Nor need you fear any permanent danger that seems threatened by the accumulation of wealth in a few hands. Such accumulations are evil, but they are a temporary evil.

These great fortunes disappear almost as soon as they appear. You can count on one hand the great fortunes, most of them accumulated under your eyes, which still remain intact. And yet you have seen thousands of fortunes accumulated and

lost, either in the hands of those who accumulated or those who inherited them.

Natural laws tend irresistibly to the distribution and scattering of wealth. Human laws, however skilfully drawn to defeat this law of nature, only retard the process; and we make laws, thank God! to accelerate and not to retard the healthy process. Wealth can only be kept by the qualities that got it—watchfulness, prudence, and self-denial. But self-denial and the kindred virtues are nourished in adversity—they don't grow in the rich soil and perfumed atmosphere of inherited wealth. And the son who inherits prefers to spend or is robbed under the forms of law by hardier and cleverer men, who come out from the healthy poverty of the village to spoil the effeminate dwellers in cities. If nature had other laws, and under them transmitted the ambition and energy of the father, who made the fortune, to the son, so that the same care would nurture the growth which founded the fortune, we should in a short time see a concentration of wealth which would be appalling. But that danger we shall dread only when the laws that govern the heart and mind of men are radically changed.

CLASS PREJUDICES ABSURD

These are the considerations why any attempt to arouse and to organize class prejudices has never yet had a permanent success in our midst, and there is no likelihood that it ever will. And these are the reasons why any attempt to incite the poor against the rich by an appeal to passion and prejudice should receive the condemnation not only of those who mean well, but of those who, to say nothing of moral motives, have good sense. Where there is equality of rights and privileges under the law, where education and speech and the press are free, where suffrage is universal, elections frequent, and the conditions of life at the start, as a rule, so nearly equal, there is no merit or sense in organizing classes to oppose each other. All the while the individuals of the classes that are to fight are shifting from one class to the other; and the classes cannot stand long enough as classes to face each other for a conflict. The deserters from one class to the other can be the

only combatants, as they encounter each other in the passage. Sometimes the classes seem to stand in fixed ranks. At intervals in our history business depressions and other causes have led men to clamor for a social or legal revolution, which should loose the cohesion of social forces and precipitate a change. At such times they have put into power leaders who promised impossibilities, who promised to alter even the laws of nature, and then have found they were deluded, and the hard conditions of life, of which they complain, were not in the least mitigated. Such evils of which the poor complain are not within the powers of government: so politics is not the remedy.

SOME THINGS LAWS CANNOT CURE

Inequalities of fortune must exist until all men are created with the same tastes and capacities; they are evils which the ballot cannot cure. Destroy our present form of Government, and change our present society, and the same inequalities would reappear in any structure built upon the ruins. They cannot be cured—they can be mitigated. Education will do the most toward it, and virtue and philanthropy—teaching the rich the duty of shaping their lives to the spirit of the Golden Rule, and teaching the poor the great truth that happiness, self-respect, and the respect of others may exist without money. The world, by education and experience, will yet learn the undoubted truth that Agur prayed for the best; and that the estate within the grasp of every one of our countrymen, that midway between riches and poverty, is the happiest of all conditions.

I close as I began, with some things strictly personal to you. I hope the time will never come, veterans of the Grand Army, when you or I or our fellow-citizens shall forget this day. We should be recreant to ourselves and our dead if we did so while those men who stirred up civil strife, and who are responsible for the waste and blood of a great war, are still proclaiming to the world the justice of their "lost cause," and while its chief, marching in triumph through the States whose prosperity he wasted, is greeted as a hero and a patriot—he the prime mover in a causeless war that sent so many of our youngest and fairest and best to untimely graves.

Keep warm your recollections of those brave comrades who lie among us asleep in death. Keep warm your camp-fires for the brave comrades who still honor us among the living. See to it that your Government does n't forget them, either dead or living, and that your children recognize the debt they owe to them. By them the Government lives; by them your children have life, liberty, and happiness. Neither Government nor citizen must let a veteran suffer. The country is rich, and the soldier who saved it has the first claim on its resources. The Government must generously provide for the soldier who lost the power to earn his own living while defending his country, and no man is worthy to represent his fellow-citizens in State or national legislation who lacks in sympathy with these brave and unfortunate men. Eighty-eight thousand Jerseymen left their homes for the battle-field. I do not know how many survive; but whether few or many, none must suffer.

And this is the first and great duty of your Grand Army, to see that none of your comrades suffer. Cicero said: "The men who save a nation are as worthy of honor as those who founded it."

Soldiers of the Grand Army, you saved this nation, and while the nation lives it will render you the honor which is your due!

HONORING A DEAD SOLDIER

In December, 1886, the Grand Army Post of Westwood, N. J., went to Washington to place a tablet upon the grave of their commander in the Civil War, General Gabriel R. Paul. Mr. Phelps was invited to make the address at Arlington Cemetery, and spoke as follows:

Not for him—not for him so much as for us—is all this that we do to-day in this national cemetery.

These touching services, where your programme successfully blends the gentle suggestion of Christian worship with the sterner forms of military prescription:

The stone which we dedicate to-day and commission forever to be the sentinel of a great soldier's name—all are more for us than for him.

In this beautiful park, amid the fit companionship of heroic souls, he found rest before we came. He had secured it for himself by the unselfish, the patriotic labors of half a century, and that peaceful rest no friendly hands can increase, nor unfriendly diminish. That rest is his own forever. As for his fame, before we cut his name in stone he had written it by his own glorious achievements in history. And history shall keep his memory green longer than this marble, for his memory shall last as long as his country. His fame is his own forever.

General Paul needed no monument. Perhaps he was better without one. The Romans claimed that the hero was happier who had no monument, that the visitor, indignant at such neglect, might ask, "Why has he none?"

Had this been the fate of General Paul, how frequent would have been the rapid questionings? He was the hero of three wars. He fought the Seminoles in the Everglades, the Mexican in his chaparral, the rebel in the wilderness—where is his monument?

Is it on Tampa Bay, where he captured a camp of the savages?

Is it on Chapultepec, up whose heights he led the band that captured the citadel and lowered the Mexican flag?

Is it at Gettysburg, where a fratricidal bullet closed the eyes that for thirty years had looked defiance at his country's foes?

Had there been no tablet, would not a hundred questions like these have kept his name and his fame among the living?

But it was fit and necessary for you, soldiers of New Jersey, who were in the brigade which he commanded, and who owe to his daring and masterly leadership your pride in that flag and in your individual records, that this visit should be made and this tablet should be placed and dedicated by you, his soldiers and his children. And you have done it well. Nor will you ever regret any difficulties of the undertaking. The consciousness that you have done to the utmost all that gratitude could suggest for your gallant commander will long warm your hearts. And when you return to your happy homes in your favored State your honored seat in the chimney corner, for you are old men now, will be the softer for your patriotic journey.

You have honored yourself, your post, and the Grand Army, whose traditions you have obeyed, whose annals of effective work in preserving a living recollection of our soldier dead, you have by this act illustrated. Persevere in this good work, work as those whose time is short.

For each fortnight a full company is mustered out. Each year a brigade marching with muffled drum enters the eternal camping-ground. So working you can enter sustained and soothed by the thought that the honor and recollection you worked to give to others shall be given to you; and that your name and your doings will be held in honored memory, as becomes the soldiers and friends of Gabriel R. Paul.

AT A NEW ENGLAND DINNER

Address delivered by Mr. Phelps at the annual dinner of the New England Society in New York, December 22, 1886

This is certainly very trying, unless one is like Sherman and Woodford and Talmage, who don't care a rap what they say. I wish I were back this moment in Congress. No one listens there, and a man speaks so much better when no one listens! This silent attention with which you are starting makes me nervous. I am not used to it. I never saw anything like it in Washington except last week at Arlington. I went out there with a few Jersey veterans to place a tablet on the grave of their old commander. I made a long speech under the trees and in the snow, yet the vast majority of my audience never stirred until I was through. Nor did they then. I wish you had all been there, gentlemen. I wish your fascinating Chairman, who always gets what he wants, except now and then a fee, were there now. I told him I would better not come.

"Think it over," said he, "and you 'll feel better about it."

And I did think it over, and I am thinking it over now, and if you want to know how I feel, ask Dr. Talmage about the drunken man he found sitting on the steps of his Tabernacle. Dr. Talmage takes every one in, in that Tabernacle; so he tried to take this man. But the man refused.

"I was thinking I would join your Church," he said, "but the longer I think about it, the sicker I feel."

Another thing against your President. He promised to send the last report, that I might see how I ought to speak. That is one promise he kept. The report came in an envelope that cheerfully suggested a public document or a receiver's fee—something that you get for nothing. And when I opened the report I read: "The Last Speech of Daniel Webster before the New England Society of New York."

Do you wonder, gentlemen, that I am forced to say that I feel, like Artemus Ward, with naked cannibals brandishing their spears at his breast, "not dismayed but somewhat discouraged"? Indeed, nothing encourages me but the recollection of the heroic sufferings of the Pilgrim Fathers, and the knowledge that not a man who hears me can vote at the Jersey polls; and yet, if we can believe New England orators, the Pilgrim Fathers never had a dinner, and if they never had a dinner how could they have an after-dinner speech? Or if they had a bad dinner, what kind—? But Mr. Depew can answer that. For he cannot deny that the subject was brought to his attention, in the course of business, by a recent letter of this purport:

"*To the President of the Central Road.*

"SIR: They say you are a great after-dinner speaker. Will you kindly inform me what kind of a speech you could make if you got your dinner at the Poughkeepsie restaurant?"

I thought I would speak about Congress to-night. I thought it would be a novelty to this sated audience for a man to speak of anything he knew something about. Great orators can't afford to do it. Whoever heard Dr. Talmage speak of religion? And yet he speaks on everything else—the Brooklyn Bridge, the shop-girl, the Stock Exchange, and the Devil. Or Depew speak of railways? Yet who ever made a greater railway success? "Labor reduced from 75 to 55 per cent.," says the last report. Why, at this rate there will be no labor at all on the Central! and that 's just what his friends said when he took the road. Well, one thing is certain, the Vanderbilts won't get much work out of Chauncey!

And our fiery Grady, did he say one word of newspapers? And yet he has made the New South he spoke so touchingly

of—made it with his *Atlanta Constitution*, whose weekly has a circulation of ninety thousand, gentlemen. And he knows how to run a paper, too. He noticed a citizen as dead. The citizen appeared alive! "Can't correct it," said Editor Grady. "But I 'll put you in among the births."

CONGRESS FROM PERSONAL OBSERVATION

I want to say two or three things about Congress. They are the results of personal observation, and they are very different from the common impression. For these wrong impressions I think the newspapers are to blame, our city papers more than our country ones. For that matter, I sometimes think that our city papers, as a class, are singularly out of sympathy with the millions of Americans who live off of Manhattan Island. It was certainly from them that I got my ideas about Congress. When I went up to Washington first, some fourteen years ago, I felt sure I was going into bad company —that I should find Congressmen a bad lot, many of them corrupt, a majority self-seeking, and nearly all stupid. Actual contact soon convinced me of my error. And I am here tonight to say that I do not know where one could elsewhere find, in a collection of citizens of the same size, a larger number of high character than in the House of Representatives. The papers spoke of gross intemperance. I found a majority of them men who conscientiously abstained from all intoxicating drinks, while moderation was conspicuously the rule. I have seen but two cases of intemperance on the floor of the House, and these were not gross, and were, in a measure, excusable.

I expected to find most of the Members irreligious, dissolute, and profane. I don't pretend to know the secret vices of any of them—how fortunate, gentlemen, that no one can know yours!—but I know that as far as their associates can tell very many are religious, while the general tone of conduct and conversation is that of self-respecting gentlemen. Especially I was taught that many were corrupt, selling their votes and turning ready ear to every solicitation to private gain. What were the facts? In the Forty-third Congress, when carpet-

bag districts made it a bad average, there were but thirteen men of whose motives any one had a suspicion, and only five who were known to be venal. And so exceptional and conspicuous were these cases that the greenest Member knew them by name, and their influence was n't worth paying for. I remember having a desk between MacDill of Iowa and MacDougal of New York, both young Members like myself. I often entered when the roll-call was in progress on some claim.

"Well, Mac," I would ask, turning to either Member, "which way do we vote?"

And in a score of times the answer would be made and received with intelligent chuckles: "I don't myself know anything about it, but I see that such a Member"—naming one of the thirteen—"has voted for it, so we 'd better vote against it." And we always did. This was the Forty-third Congress, and in no one since has there been anything like so many suspects. There are three hundred and twenty-five of us, taken from all sorts of districts, nominated and elected in all sorts of ways. Does not this give most gratifying evidence of the deep underlying recognition of civic responsibility, which controls the average American citizen? I don't mean to say that these Representatives are not eager to retain their positions and increase their influence and fame, nor that they are not often unscrupulous as to the means; but I do mean to say that all of them, even the worst, have a great regard for their country, and a great sense of the honor of being a trustee of its good name, and that this feeling is in nearly all cases a controlling one. The Member may be rough and coarse, indifferent to delicate considerations of manner, and even of matter, which you and I consider most important; but for all that, no one will get him to vote for what he thinks is against the public good any quicker than you or I would. If he does vote wrong, as you and I think he does pretty often, it is because he is ignorant and mistakes the relation of the measure to the public weal. If he votes for a bad measure, the reason, in ninety-nine cases out of the hundred, is because he thinks it is the right one. Shall we not recognize the purity and worth of his motive?

REPRESENTATIVES COME FROM THE PEOPLE

Does this surprise you? Consider these men are Representatives of the people who elect them, and the people still, thank God, are singularly moral and patriotic. Don't fail to notice the distinction I make between moral principle and intelligence. I don't claim that all the Members of Congress are intelligent; neither are the constituencies. Few Members have any knowledge of historical precedent and of economic science, or skill in the arts of statesmanship, the power to reason and persuade—to sum their lacking in one word, culture. But how few constituencies have any culture themselves or want it in their Representatives. Nor am I sure if these ruder constituencies found their Members full of this culture, that they would find them so ready to express and enforce the peculiar wants of their districts in Congress. The Member might represent better what the district ought to want, but would be less likely to represent what the district actually does want.

The editor does n't think of this. He belongs to the cultured class, and has no patience with a Member's slow appreciation of economic truths. Ignorant of the honest purpose of the Member, the editor thinks his indifference is not intellectual, but moral. He assumes that because it is so plain to him it must be plain to the Member, and that the Member refuses to recognize the value of the truth, because he is perverse; whereas if the editor knew the Member, he would see that the Member's ignorance of political theories was dense, but that his wish to adopt the theory which was best for the country was an ardent one, and a sure ground of hope and encouragement. The discovery would show the editor that all that was needed was patience and time, till the well-disposed Member should understand the truth. Besides, the city editor with all his culture, and the city Member with all his economic lore, is not always the one who is wholly right. Political economy is a science which is not a science. There are too many elements which will not come to stand for generalization, and too many truths which seemed like axioms yesterday, and which the facts of to-day turn into untruths; so

sometimes I feel tempted to confess that the Western Member, by his stolid hold upon facts, may have been as helpful to legislation as we in the ambition of our theories. If the West accepts theory too slowly, how often have we seized it with an excessive zeal.

FINANCIAL QUESTIONS AS AN EXAMPLE

Take the money questions. Here we are apt to be dogmatic, and seem to have most right to be. Shall we not confess that we said, and said it according to laws which have governed human affairs from the beginning, "There can be no resumption when we lack the money, and every creditor knows that there is not enough to pay him and the rest," while the Western Member, who knew nothing of laws which had governed human affairs from the beginning, and who seemed to care less, but who knew and cared very much what the people of his district wanted, said, "The way to resume is to resume"—and resumption was a fact. Or take another instance. If ever there was a monometallist it was I, and when ten years ago Members who lived near the silver mines spoke to me of bimetallism I felt outraged that they should insult me in what seemed to me an unblushing effort to aid their section and industry at the expense of God's truth and the National safety. The silver men are not all right yet, and they are very wrong to cling still to a depreciated dollar. But because they are wrong at this point, I am not going to forget that I was wrong at the other. I admit now, as the world does, that gold as the only legal tender is impracticable, and that the ultimate outcome of our currency troubles must and will be the use of two metals. A silver dollar shall pass as a gold dollar, only the silver dollar must have enough silver to be worth the gold dollar; and that is nothing but bimetallism, and the "stupid" Western Member has brought us and the world to that conclusion.

If I have, in the few moments allotted to me, done anything to correct a local public opinion that has done great injustice to an earnest, patriotic, and worthy body of men, I shall be glad that I came here this evening; glad for the sake of the House of Representatives, which I greatly respect, and of which I am

proud to be a Member; glad for your sake, for it is a pleasanter thing to think well of those whom you have made your rulers. And for my own part, if you are dissatisfied with what I have said this evening, my only comment is that which a little girl made to her mother, who chided her because God would not be pleased with her sleepy prayer: "Well, it 's the best He will get out of me to-night."

THE END